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ABSTRACT

Early interventions and educational expectations that promote access, quality education, and the right to career options are necessary parts of any dropout prevention program. This report suggests that preventing school failure and empowering students to succeed should be the goals of such programs. It discusses student underachievement and specifically the inequity of educational services for language minority students. It maintains the importance of collaboration between school, community, and home in preventing dropping out. The material is organized as follows: (1) review of literature on factors and conditions driving the high risk and dropout problem; (2) effect of student empowerment on academic success; (3) five stages of social and academic indicators that foster and/or contribute to dropping out; (4) need for collaborative intervention programs; (5) process for identification, planning, development, and implementation of a school dropout prevention plan; (6) some suggested interventions; (7) summary; (8) bibliography; and (9) appendices which include a sample mission statement on dropout prevention, definitions of a school dropout, roundtable recommendations, lists of members of roundtable task forces, and project questionnaires. (PS)

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San Diego State University

Hispanic Students: A Critical Evaluation of Current Practices

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THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL STUDENTS:
A FRAMEWORK FOR THE PREVENTION OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS

by

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SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

> Without a diploma or a marketable skill, the dropout faces unemployment or a low paying blue-collar job, together with feelings of inferiority and alienation. The costs of quitting school are obviously high for the dropout, but they are also high for society, which must bear the financial brunt of the dropout's inability to hold a job. Considering the tragic circumstances of dropping out, preventative action within the schools is not only desirable but essential. (A Study of Student Dropout, Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985.)

The problem of school dropouts is indeed complex and a most difficult challenge because it involves the home, student, and organizational factors which have a direct and indirect impact on the root causes of the dropout problem. Unfortunately, the focus of a number of major research studies that seek to address the dropout issue are narrow and based on a deficit model that tends to blame the student, the family and the sociocultural background of the student, ignoring organizational and structural school related variables and conditions. Compounding the problem is the fact that the largest percentage of students who leave before graduation are Hispanics and Blacks. Our research studies find that underachievement in the areas of reading and math for 80% of these students was detected as early as the third grade (Espinosa and Ochoa, 1984). These achievement results have powerful implications regarding when the dropout problem begins and possible solutions. Our research has began to examine policy issues and institutional and organizational conditions affecting dropouts. For example with respect to school size, our research results suggest that elementary schools that are over 650, tend to be ethnically impacted, have the minimum base funds, and have large categorical programs and funding that have a negative bearing on student learning and motivation. The results raise serious concerns about the direction being taken by institutions to develop effective programs for addressing

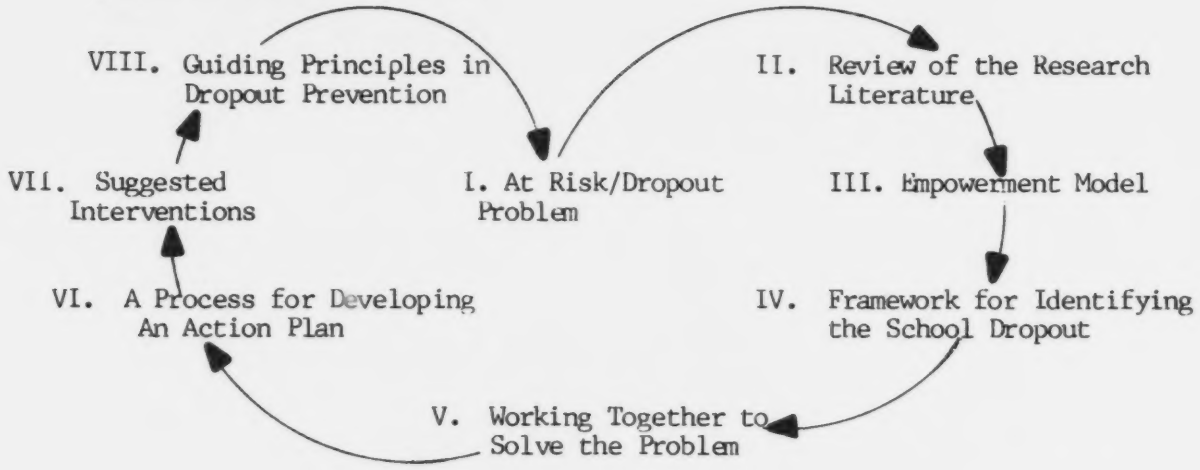
the educational needs of high risk students. These concerns as well as our other research findings have prompted the preparation of this publication.

The major thrust of the contents of this publication is the result of ten years of work in addressing student underachievement and specifically the inequity of educational services for language minority students. The data and information gathered from workshops, institutes and conferences seeking the prevention of school dropouts are reflected herein. This publication focuses on theoretical as well as applied concepts and variables contributing to the prevention of the dropout

In attempting to lower the dropout rates, researchers have strongly recommended that a key factor in the early prevention of school dropouts is a carefully planned process by the school personnel and community in order to have an accurate understanding of the root causes of the problem and an early, active and continued total district commitment to resolve it (Berman and McLaughlin, 1977). Educational change research calls for the need to guide a school district step by step in the development and implementation of an action plan that addresses the needs of students (Benne, Bennis & Chinn, 1969; Havelock, 1980). For these reasons, Section VI presents a process for the identification, planning, development and implementation of a school dropout prevention plan. The plan will:

- Suggest procedures to facilitate the development and implementation of an effective approach for the early prevention of the high risk student and school dropout.
- Assist districts in the task of preparing a district wide action plan which will address the problem of the high risk student and school dropout.

The contents of this material is divided into eight sections as depicted in the schema below.


VIII. Guiding Principles in Dropout Prevention
II. Review of the Research Literature
VII. Suggested Interventions
I. At Risk/Dropout Problem
III. Empowerment Model
VI. A Process for Developing An Action Plan
IV. Framework for Identifying the School Dropout
V. Working Together to Solve the Problem

The first section provides an overview of this publication on the prevention of school dropouts. The second section contains a selected review of the literature on factors and conditions driving the high risk student and dropout problems. The third section provides a model of educational empowerment that assists in explaining student school success or failure. The fourth section provides a framework that outlines the sequence of stages that a student passes through before dropping out of school. The fifth section focuses on collaborative efforts in resolving the problem. The sixth section concentrates on a suggested district planning process for the identification, development and implementation of a school dropout prevention action plan. The seventh section suggests some early intervention strategies in the prevention of dropouts. Section eight is a summary of principles to guide a school district through an early, active and continued process of dropout prevention. In the appendix, supportive materials are provided to operationalize certain concepts or ideas suggested in this publication. A bibliography is provided as a resource for further reading on this subject matter.

II. SELECTED REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON FACTORS AND CONDITIONS DRIVING THE HIGH RISK AND DROPOUT PROBLEM

Introduction

A review of forty-five selected references on issues associated with high risk students and dropouts were examined. The literature was analyzed according to: 1) the manner in which high risk students and dropouts are characterized, 2) the suggested causes and conditions driving the problem of high risk and dropping out, 3) the demographic projections at the state and national level and implications for educational institutions and society, 4) value position reflected in the research on high risk students, and 5) current educational reform implications for high risk students.

A basic question was whether the literature supported or promoted specific policy value positions; thereby influencing persons responsible for formulating, implementing and evaluating policies, programs and practices affecting high risk students and dropouts. Value positions were taken as reflected in the causes and conditions behind the problem. These causes and conditions could be: 1) rooted in the personal and sociocultural background of the "victims" themselves, 2) derived from institutional organization, settings and requirements, or could 3) result from an interaction between "personal" and "school related" factors. The goal of the review was to establish whether the present course of direction taken with respect to high risk students and dropouts is adequate and will remain so in the face of projected demographic shifts, or whether some new course of action and point of intervention is required.

Profile of High Risk Students and Dropouts

The literature associated with high risk students and dropouts is divided into two categories. The first category identifies high risk

students and dropouts as a single, distinct population characterized by a particular set of problems and issues. The second category includes high risk students, dropouts and other students in a broader category identified as "underachievers." The literature tacitly implies that underachievers will eventually become at risk or dropout. Therefore, the problems and issues affecting each group are indistinguishable, except by the timing of their occurrence.

Given the findings of a number of studies identifying underachievement as a predictor of, or having a strong correlation with, high risk and dropping out, and the inability of current policies, programs and practices to reverse the pattern of academic underachievement among Hispanic students, there is sound reason for utilizing this second broader category when profiling high risk students and dropouts (Arias, 1984; Austin Independent School District, 1983; Brown, 1984; Carter and MacFadden, 1980; Cervantes, 1982; Espinosa and Ochoa, 1984; San Diego Unified School District, 1985; and Steinberg,1982). The review of the literature which follows reflects this utilization and, therefore, incorporates data on underachievers.

High risk students and dropouts are profiled according to personal and sociocultural background, as well as in terms of academic variables and school-related factors. While the traditional emphasis in the literature has focused on the students, the current body of studies and information highlights school factors. High risk students and dropouts are characterized in terms of the factors which precipitate their risk condition and subsequent departure from school.

The literature examining personal and sociocultural background describes the students in terms of language dominance, socioeconomic status,

gender, family structure and values, and ethnicity. Language background is one of several features of "differentness" which distinguishes high risk students from other students and is a factor in their subsequent departure from school (Camp, Gibbs, and Monogan, 1980). Low socioeconomic status of the student's family is another factor associated with students who dropout (Arias, 1984). Camp, Gibbs, and Monogan, in their 1980 work "School Dropouts - A Discussion Paper," confirm that "a higher proportion of youth from low income and working class families are dropouts."

State level data indicates that, in California, male and female students leave school before graduating with essentially the same frequency, but do so for different reasons and have substantially different employment records subsequent to leaving (Camp, Gibbs, and Monogan, 1980). District level data in both the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD), however, reveal that the ratio of male leavers to female leavers is higher within their districts and that they leave for distinctively different reasons than female students (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985; San Diego Unified School District, 1985). LAUSD (1985) reports that the differences in ratio and reasons for dropping out hold true regardless of whether comparison is made at the site level or district level. In further contrast to the California data, Austin Independent School District reports that females within the same grade, at the same level of academic achievement, and within the same ethnic group are more likely to dropout than are male students (Austin Independent School District, 1983).

A California State Department of Education (1984) study indicates that the families of dropout students value the education of their children and hold many of the same aspirations for them as families of

students who complete high school. The report also indicates that families are fully cognizant of the consequences which dropping out will have for their children. This finding is substantiated in a report by the Superintendent's Council on Hispanic Affairs (1985). An article examining the dropout problem nationwide suggests that the difference between families has less to to do with values, attitudes, and aspirations the families hold for their children and more to do with household structure. The article reports that dropouts are more likely to come from single parent households than are their counterparts who "stay-in" through gradutation (Education U.S.A., 1986). The Superintendent's Council on Hispanic Affairs (1985), however, suggests that family values and structure are secondary as factors when compared to the risk created by implementation of educational policies that have not been analyzed for their potential negative impact on high risk students.

When examined by ethnicity, national, state and district level data reveal that Hispanics have the highest attrition rate of all student populations (Arias, 1984; Superintendent's Council on Hispanic Affairs, 1985; and Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985). Nationally, the attrition rate for Hispanic students is forty-five percent, in comparison with twenty-one percent for Anglo students (Mann, 1986). Forty percent of all Hispanic students who leave school do so before reaching tenth grade (National Commission on Secondary Education for Hispanics, 1984). In California, the attrition rate for Hispanics is estimated to be forty-five to fifty percent, but as high as seventy percent in "some of the more racially segregated and economically impacted communities" (Superintendent's Council on Hispanic Affairs, 1985). Attrition rates in "schools which are located near urban centers" is approximately fifty

percent; a significant finding in light of demographic data which indicates that Hispanics are the most highly urbanized population in the United States (National Commission on Secondary Education for Hispanics, 1984). District level data indicates that Hispanics comprise forty-three percent of all school leavers (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985).

Literature profiling high risk students and dropouts according to school-related variables describe them according to: academic achievement, grade relative to age (overage for grade level), basic skills level (relative to grade level and to other student populations), grade point average, representation in remedial versus gifted programs, percentage enrolled in state and federal entitlement programs, and English language proficiency.

Hispanic students are described in national level data according to the number of years that they lag behind in national achievement norms. Arias (1984) notes, in "The Status of Educational Attainment of Chicano and Mexican Student," that Hispanics lag four years behind compared to the norm. With respect to state standardized tests, San Diego County reports that at the end of third grade seventy-five percent of all Hispanic students "are scoring below grade level and remain underachievers throughout their school experience" (Rodriguez, 1985).

High risk students have also been profiled according to age relative to grade. National level data indicates that approximately twice as many Chicano and Mexican students aged fourteen to twenty are enrolled at least two years below their expected grade level (Arias, 1984; Hirano-Nakanishi, n.d.). In a study of Hispanic underachievers in California, Cervantes (1982) found that "Hispanic students have three times the overageness

when compared to Anglo students." At the district level, Los Angeles Unified School District reports that being overage for grade is more often cited as a reason for leaving school among male students than among female, and is more often likely to be the cause of students departure during the eleventh and twelfth grade than it is during the tenth grade (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985). Austin Independent School District (AISD), however, reports that grade relative to age is equally significant as a contributing factor for female early school leavers as it is for male leavers. In its district-wide study of dropouts, AISD found that over fifty percent of all Hispanic males who dropped out were one or more grades below the level expected for their age, as were fifty percent of female dropouts, regardless of ethnicity.

High risk and dropout students are characterized in the literature in terms of their basic skills level. They have been profiled by skill level relative to grade, and relative to skill level of other student populations. According to national data, Hispanic students aged nine to thirteen score "lower at statistically significant levels" than their Anglo counterparts in math, reading and "educational development" (Nielsen, 1981). Data analyzed for the state of California reveals that the number of Hispanic students reading below grade level is twice that of Anglo students and, conversely, the number of Hispanics reading above grade level is only half that of Anglo counterparts (Espinosa and Ochoa, 1984). In San Diego County seventy-five percent of all Hispanic students are scoring below grade level on the California Achievement Profile test (Rodriguez, 1985).

Grade point average has been utilized at the district level in both Texas and California in profiles of early school leavers. Austin

Independent School District (1983) found that "grade point average is the single best predictor" of early school leaving in its district study on dropouts. San Diego Unified School District (1985) notes that, for all of the students for whom data were available, over fifty percent of those who left prior to graduation had grade point averages of 1.5 out of 4 at the time of their departure and would have averaged a 1.0 when projected over a four year period. Survey results in Los Angeles Independent School District (1985) indicate that administrators, teachers, parents and students agree that "poor grades" was one of the major factors contributing to students' decisions to dropout of school.

Literature on high risk students and dropouts also note that Hispanic students are disproportionately represented in "special" programs. California data reveal that they are overrepresented in remedial programs and underrepresented in gifted, talented and honors programs. The Superintendent's Council on Hispanic Affairs (1985) reports that Hispanics comprise "less than ten percent of the State's gifted, and talented programs," whereas Anglos represent seventy percent of the total enrollment in these programs. Data on San Diego County programs validate that Hispanics make up disproportionately large proportions of remedial and disproportionately small proportions of gifted programs (Rodriguez, 1985).

High risk students are identified according to the size of their enrollment in state and federal entitlement programs. A statewide survey from California indicates that approximately fifty percent of all Hispanic students are on the rosters of various types of entitlement programs. These include migrant education, English second language and bilingual programs, special education, and programs for the gifted and talented.

However, representation in remedial programs is far greater than their representation in gifted programs, further substantiating findings noted above (Arias, 1984).

English language proficiency is utilized for purposes of describing high risk students and dropouts both at the national and district level. Cervantes (1982) notes, in a study of fluent English Hispanic underachievers, that approximately thirty percent of all Hispanic students are limited English language proficient (LEPs). Cervantes also notes that as LEPs are by definition below grade level in English, they also contribute to the total number of Hispanic students who are labled "academic underachievers." Over forty-five percent of all Hispanic students could be labeled as underachievers: When the percent of LEPs is calculated, the result is that approximately seventy-five percent of all Hispanic students are underachievers. District level data for San Diego Unified School District (1985) reveal that Hispanic LEP students comprise about twelve percent of the total number of early school leavers; leaving at about twice the rate of Hipanic fully English proficient students.

Causes and Conditions Driving the High Risk and Dropout Problem

Causes and conditions driving the high risk and dropout problem have been related to the personal and sociocultural background of the students, as well as to factors associated with the educational institutions. The current body of literature acknowledges the impact of the former, but emphasizes the role that the latter plays in creating conditions of high risk which, if unmitigated, greatly increase students' potential for leaving school. The literature also reflects an awareness that conditions generating the problem are likely to be the result of an interaction between the personal/sociocultural and school-related factors.

The literature associating causes and conditions driving the problem with the personal and sociocultural background of students and their families attribute conditions to: marriage and/or pregnancy of students, feelings of alienation from, or dislike of, school and the school environment, histories of disciplinary problems and/or truancy, social and economic pressures on students, language dominance, and the ethnicity and gender of students.

State and district level data identify pregnancy as a significant factor driving the dropout problem. Analysis of data for California indicates that it is the most common reason for early school leaving under reasons classified as "personal" (California Assembly Office of Research, 1984). Survey data for Los Angeles Unified School District (1985) reveals that administrators, teachers, and students agree that pregnancy is among the major factors causing students to dropout of school. San Diego Unified School District (1985) has found that seven percent of females students who left school did so for reasons of "marriage, pregnancy, and hardship."

Alienation from school and dislike of school and the school environment are identified as factors creating the problem of high risk and dropping out of school. A national study of "out of school youth" suggests that dropouts were students who felt alienated from the school environment and student body as a result of their "differentness" from other students. The dropouts were characterized as being those students who were "predominantly non-White (or White, but not middle class), poor, non-English speaking, having special needs, too smart, or not smart enough" (Camp, Gibbs, and Monagan, 1980). Other national data confirms that high risk students "simply don't fit in" and "sense that they have

little control over their futures" (Education U.S.A., 1986). Survey data from a study of dropouts conducted in Los Angeles Unified School District reveals that administrators, teachers, parents and students agree that "dislike of school" is one of the most significant factors causing students to dropout of school. Administrators also identified "dislike of teachers" as a primary cause; whereas parents, teachers, and students considered it a secondary factor (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985).

Incidence of behavior and disciplinary problems is identified in national and district studies as having an impact on students' decisions to leave school. National survey results indicate that out of school youth tend to have histories which include "acts of delinquency" (Camp, Gibbs and Monagan, 1980). Survey findings for Los Angeles Unified School District (1985) show that teachers view suspension and expulsion among the leading reasons for students to dropout. Parents and students, however, rate it as only of secondary importance.

National, state and district data point to truancy and poor attendance as being among the causes and conditions which promote high risk and dropping out. National study results suggest that inspite of compulsory attendance laws, the number of youth between the ages of twelve and seventeen who leave school is increasing: and many of those disadvantaged students who do remain in school are so rarely present that their connection to school is marginal" (Camp, Gibbs, and Monagan, 1980). Another national study, analyzing data from four major educational data bases, reveals that "truancy and tardiness" are features which distinguish dropouts from "stay-ins and college bound students" (Wehlage and Rutter, 1985).

A California study results indicate that absenteeism is such a significant factor in conditions of high risk that it is considered the most clearly identifiable predictor of dropping out (California State Department of Education, 1983). District survey findings from Los Angeles Unified School District (1985) reveal that administrators, teachers, parents and students agree that "habitual truancy" is among the leading causes for leaving school.

Personal and sociocultural background factors associated with conditions driving the high risk and dropout problem also include social and economic pressures on students. A national study suggests that low socioeconomic status of the family is strongly correlated with dropout rates (Wehlage and Rutter, 1985). State level data reveal that economic necessity is the second most common reason for students to dropout of school in California (California Assembly Office of Research, 1984). Survey [illegible]udy of dropouts in Los Angeles Unified School District (1985) indica[illegible]at administrators, teachers, parents and students agree that "family problems" is among the most significant reasons for students to leave school. Administrators and teachers perceive "work-related responsibilities" as another primary cause; whereas students ranked it as only a secondary factor prompting early school departure.

Language proficiency, ethnicity and gender are additional factors associated with students' personal and sociocultural background that are identified as contributors to early school departure rates. National data points to the "unalterable circumstances such as the student's language, race, culture and gender" as signficant factors affecting dropout rates (Education U.S.A., 1986). Another national study on dropping out among "language minority youth," cautions however, that the "independent effects of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and language on dropping

out" are not yet known and any results which are available are highly contradictory. This study suggests that it remains unclear whether language minority youth drop out in greater numbers than English speakers because "they are more likely to be characterized by attributes of school leavers in general, or because there are specific factors which operate among them to promote their leaving." Neither has the question been satisfactorily answered whether language background or language proficiecy of the student is more significant in the creation of risk conditions among language minority youth (Steinberg, 1982). In cases where language background is considered the more significant of the two, language is more likely to be identified in the literature as a personal or socio-cultural factor driving the high risk and dropout problem. Where language proficiency is rated as the more important, language is classified among school-related variables.

Wehlage and Rutter (1985), in their study "Dropping Out: How Much Do Schools Contribute to the Problem?" found that "race and ethnicity, after controlling for socioeconomic background, is not a predictor of dropping out." Austin Independent School District (1983), in a similar vein, found that although ethnicity was the third strongest predictor of dropping out, no negative, ethnicity factors could be found which operate independent of school-related factors. Further, the district found that all "cultural characteristics related to dropping out operate through academic variables (such as GPA and grade relative to age), incidence of discipline problems, and gender."

The literature associating the causes and conditions driving the high risk and dropout problem with school-related factors attribute conditions to: 1) school site factors such as school size, location, safety and

attractiveness, as well as the socioeconomic and ethnic composition of the school itself; 2) programmatic factors such as curricular tracking and ability grouping, as well as age/grade placement and grade repetition; and 3) instructional factors such as teacher attitude and expectations, and language of instruction.

National studies related to school site factors indicate the socioeconomic and ethnic composition of the school have an impact on student achievement, and therefore implictly on conditions of high risk and dropout rates. In one national study, socioeconomic composition of the school was found to account for "over fifty percent of the variance in between-school differences in student achievement levels." This is particularly significant in light of another finding in the same study which indicates that "over two-thirds of all Hispanics attend schools which are over fifty percent minority." This study also reveals that the problem of low achievement and high risk in these schools are further aggrevated by the fact that they are "overcrowded, ill-equipped, and have lower per pupil budgets than schools in adjacent areas" (National Commission on Secondary Education for Hispanics, 1984).

District level data for Los Angeles Unified School District, in similar vein, reveals that schools with predominantly Hispanic or Black student bodies have higher dropout rates than do those with predominantly Anglo and Asian/Pacific Islander student populations. In addition, the study found that "within school" differences in dropout rates exist for different ethnic and racial groups. Within school rates are higher for those students whose racial/ethnic group represents a significantly smaller percentage of the total school population (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985).

School size is another site factor which has been associated with conditions driving the problem of high risk. Data suggest that "overcrowding and understaffing of schools leads to higher attrition rates" (National Commission on Secondary Education of Hispanics, 1984). In addition, this study suggests the combined factors of geographical location of the school and decisions regarding territorial division of the area into school districts create conditions of risk for certain schools. It notes: "when cities and metropolitan areas have multiple independent school districts within their boundaries, the tax bases of inner-city districts are often insufficient to meet the needs of their low-income student bodies." District level data from Los Angeles Unified School District may substantiate this finding regarding the role which geographical location and territorial division plays in generating high risk conditions and increasing dropout rates. The study on dropouts in LAUSD reveals that while there were "no significant differences in dropout rates for schools located within the same administrative area," there were significant differences across areas (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985).

National level data suggest that school attractiveness and safety are also school-related factors driving the high risk and dropout problem. Carter and Segura (1979), Goodlad (1983) and the National Commission on Secondary Education for Hispanics (1984) in their analysis of educational attainment of Chicano and Mexican students note that dangerous or unattractive physical environments lead to a higher risk of attrition, and a lack of resources for making them attractive will fail to hold students in school.

The literature associating causes and conditions with school-related variables also cites programmatic factors such as ability grouping and

curricular tracking as influencing dropout rates. Data on the educational attainment of Chicano and Mexican students in particular note a relationship between risk of early attrition and prejudicial and inappropriate tracking (Cervantes, 1982; and Goodland, 1983). Other national data found that thirty-five percent of all Hispanic students are in vocational education tracks and forty percent of them are in general education classes as opposed to "strong academic courses of study" (National Commission on Secondary Education for Hispanics, 1984). The remaining twenty-five percent of the Hispanic population is not accounted for by the study. State level data confirms national findings that academic failure and dropping out are, in large measure, a result of programmatic practices and policies which translate into a disproportionately high representation of Hispanic and other minority students in vocational and remedial tracks (California Assembly Office of Research, 1985).

Another instructional factor driving the high risk and dropout problem is the language of instruction used in the classroom. National data indicates that language of instruction and evaluation is related to high risk because academic achievement in elementary and secondary schools hinges on English reading ability and on the results of standardized tests, which are given in English. Test results are often the basis for programmatic decisions such as curricular tracking, ability grouping and grade placement. The study also notes that instruction in a language in which the student is not proficient sets the stage for academic failure, and academic failure is a predictor of dropping out of school (Arias, 1984). The study also indicates that language proficiency is a predictor of grade retention and, as already noted, being overage has been identified with dropping out.

Other national data indicate that there is evidence that language has an effect on teacher interactions with students and teacher expectations. The study suggests that teachers tend to act more negatively with non English speaking students and are less likely to demonstrate the type of support which promotes achievement. It notes that findings do not clarify, however, whether negative teacher interaction precedes or follows the poor academic perfomance of language minority youth (Steinberg and Chan, 1982).

State and National Demographic Projections: Implications for Dropout Rates and Costs Associated With Dropping Out

State and national demographic projections indicate that an increasing number of high risk students will be entering public schools, both state and nationwide (Carter and MacFadden, 1980; Hodgkinson, 1985; Ochoa and Espinosa, 1984). These high risk students come from poor, single parent households, are ethnically diverse, and have limited English language proficiency (Camp, Gibbs, and Monagan, 1980; Education U.S.A., 1986).

The literature suggests that dropping out of school is a problem which is costly to the individuals directly involved and to others as well. Nespor (1985), in her briefing on high risk youth for the State Department of Education, identifies some of the costs. Dropping out is costly to schools in terms of "lost" average daily attendance money; approximately 1.1 billion dollars annually in California. It is costly to the state and federal government in terms of expenditures on a combination of prevention, remediation, and recovery programs: approximately four billion dollars in federal and state revenues were spent on an estimated three and one-half million high risk students in California.

Dropping out is costly to the nation in terms of lost output in gross national product, public services and labor force time. An estimated seventy one billion dollars is foregone in government revenues; forty-seven billion of which would have been added to the federal treasury and twenty-four billion of which would have been allocated to state and local governments. The problem is costly to state agencies which are charged with the responsibility of addressing the effects at many levels. The combined costs of all state agencies, including the State Department of Education, is in excess of five billion dollars. It is also extremely costly to the individuals themselves in terms of a lack of basic skills with which to face a rapidly changing future, high potential for under- or unemployment, and possible relegation to second class citizenship.

The literature also reveals that the social and economic well-being of the nation, state, as well as many regional and metropolitan areas is becoming increasingly dependent on the degree of success educational institutions have in improving academic achievement levels of the poor and minority students who will come to represent a greater percent of the total population (Catterall, 1986; Levin 1985). As educational institutions fail to keep larger numbers of high risk students in school, and fail to prepare greater numbers of students with marketable skills, the effects of the dropout problem will "spillover" and have a significant impact on those who have previously been untouched by its cost, personally or socially.

Levin, in his study of the educationally disadvantaged, indicates that the proportion of these students is rapidly increasing. He cautions that when the disadvantaged population represented a relatively small proportion of total school enrollment, the failure of the school to edu-

cate this small group was tragic only for its own members. However, as this population increases in size and in fact becomes a "minority-majority," the effects will become more pervasive and result in spillovers which will affect not only community members but all of society. He concludes that these spillover effects will result in reduced economic competitiveness of the nation and state, higher costs of public services associated with crime and improverishment, and emergence of a dual society (Levin, 1985).

Value Position Reflected in the Research on High Risk Students and Dropouts: Interactional Models

Research on high risk students and dropouts supports the value position that the causes and conditions driving the problem derive from the interaction between personal/sociocultural characteristics of students and the organizational, structural and instructional requirements of educational institutions. The literature presents a number of studies that examine the potential which interactional models, incorporating factors from both the personal/sociocultural and school-related areas, have for ameliorating causes and conditions driving the high risk and dropout problem.

Steinberg and Chan (1982), in their study of language minority youth, suggest that research on dropping out among these students has been too narrow in its focus; most often focusing on student characteristics rather than on school factors. They note that even fewer studies have examined the process of dropping out as a cumulative process. The authors suggest that the phenomena is best understood when viewed as an interaction between variables related to "early academic failure," "negative interactions with teachers and school personnel," and the "lack of fit" between

the needs of language minority youth and the school. They conclude that research and models which focus soley on student characteristics do not provide a basis for action by policy-makers and educators who are seeking solutions to the problem of high risk and dropout rates. Interactional models, however, would promote policy action by focusing on the "dynamics of the process" rather than on just the outcome, and would take into account the "broader ecology in which the student exists."

In its report "Dropping Out, Losing Out: The High Cost for California," the California Assembly Office of Research (1984) examines the consequences of high dropout rates for the state and identifies personal, economic and academic factors that influence students' decisions to leave school. The authors identify a number of school-related factors which need to be addressed to resolve the problem. These include the "inadequacy of counseling services," the tendency to "track (minority) students into remedial classes in disproportionately high numbers, and into honors and college prep programs in disproportionately low numbers," and the "narrowing of curriculum" in response to budget cutbacks, while increasing graduation requirements and the number and types of proficiency testing. The authors conclude that schools can become more effective in raising academic achievement of students, but suggest that this will require changes in "curriculum," "counseling" and "school organization."

The bulk of social science research on high risk students has resulted in piecemeal solutions to the problem (Blum and Spangehl, 1982). The authors suggest that such solutions fail to consider the complete set of variables which affect students' educational experiences. They conclude that solutions must account for students full range of experiences, from "formal class work to extracurricular activities, and home life."

Wehlage and Rutter suggest that the dropout issue be redefined in a manner which takes school-related variables into account. They emphasize that redefinition in this fashion would provide a foundation for school-based reform, which is not possible when the problem is defined only in terms of the personal characteristics of students and their families. School related factors that should be considered in any redefinition include "academic function variables" (achievement and ability level, grades, and test scores) and "social context of school variables," such as truancy, expectations, discipline problems, tardiness and hours worked (Wehlage and Rutter, 1985).

Current Educational Reform Implications For High Risk Students

The recent release of a number of major evaluations regarding the quality of education in the United States has been the catalyst for an educational reform movement nation and statewide. Appraisal of policies and practices stimulated by this movement indicates that there is cause for concern regarding the effect that new requirements may have on students who are already at risk under the old standards. There is particular concern in California that new curriculum standards and graduation requirements will increase rather than decrease dropout rates unless assistance is provided to students and education reform is linked to educational equity.

Brown and Haycock (1984), Levin (1985), and Mann (1986), in their analyses of a number of reports on education, note that the current high level of public attention to the quality of education in the nation and state has been stimulated by the recent release of "no less than eight major national reports." A total of eighteen "effective schools" variables have been identified by means of these reports. These eight

reports, taken together, form the foundation of what is referred to as the "call to excellence in education." An educational reform movement has been spawned in response to this call.

The California State Board of Education (1983) analyzed the quality of education in the state and found it to be "mediocre." Findings by the Board link mediocracy in California schools to academic course requirements in public schools. As a result, the Board created a model set of curriculum standards and graduation requirements. In 1983, by means of state legislation, the State Board of Education was directed to require the governing board of each school district in the state to compare their standards and requirements with those of the state model. The Board urged school districts to begin phasing them in and provided guidelines for doing so.

Findings of the Superintendent's Council on Hispanic Affairs (1985) indicate that there is concern among Hispanics statewide that unless more serious consideration is given to the educational needs of their students, new reforms geared towards improving the quality of education in California schools may negatively affect them. While the Council found the Hispanic community very supportive of the present public demand for better quality education, it also found fear that the effect of current reform strategies would be to endanger students further who are already at risk due to "educational neglect." Of particular concern to Hispanics are the new curriculum standards and graduation requirements which comprise the state model. As Hodgkinson (1985) suggests in his study "All One System: Demographics of Education, Kindergarten Through Graduate School" implementation of increased standards and requirements without provision of instructional and institutional support would be tantamount

to "raising the jump bar" to six feet for students who could not clear the bar when it was only four feet from the ground.

The Council examined the major components of a number of reform policies and strategies and made recommendations regarding implementation in ways which would assist rather than hinder high risk students. Revisions were suggested in the areas of teacher preparation, staff development and core curriculum content (Superintendent's Council on Hispanic Affairs, 1985).

As Brown and Haycock (1984) note in their report "Excellence for Whom," the key issue in educational reform should not be the general excellence or mediocracy of blanket reforms, but "excellence for whom and by what standards." They conclude that the question of excellence must be tied to the broader issue of educational equity.

SECTION III. EMPOWERMENT OF STUDENTS: SCHOOL SUCCESS OR FAILURE

In predicting student academic success or failure, one needs to examine how the school views the student's background, the sociocultural characteristics of the school community, and how it attends to community input and involvement. Student achievement is strongly influenced by the extent to which teachers, administrators and community persons advocate for the promotion of student talents, the pedagogical approaches designed to attain grade level or better skills, and community participation guided towards bridging the home and school as a team working to improve the achievement of the student. This type of advocacy and action can empower or disempower student school succcess (Apple, 1978; Bowles & Gintis, 1974; Cummins, 1986; Goodland, 1981; Oakes, 1985; Ogbu, 1986; Persell, 1977; Rist, 1970; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

Disempowering Conditions Restraining Educational Access and Benefits

Our educational and social institutions must examine and redefine existing policies and practices that disempower the student and negate full access, benefits and expected outcomes to low-income and ethnically diverse students, and in particular, to Chicano/Hispanic and Black students. Among these policies and practices are those that promote English language monolingualism and prefer dominant values of society as superior to others (Suzuki, 1982; Persell, 1977); institutional expectations that establish low academic expectancies for low-income students based on their social, linguistic and economic background (Carter & Segura, 1979); societal perceptions that view linguistic and sociocultural differences as deficits and as problems to be remediated (Ochoa, 1982); educational practices based on norm testing that track student to limited career

options and restrain educational access and benefits for students (Mercer, 1980). The above policies and educational practices not only send a message to our ethnically diverse students that they are different, but also that our society does not expect much from them — that 80 of every 100 students will not attend schools that prepare them for the option of attending college (Espinosa & Ochoa, 1984).

The implications of the above policies and practices are well documented. A nation that promotes monoloingualism in a world economy that requires multilingual competence is a society in decline (Naisbett, 1982). An educational system that supports assimilationist values is a system that negates the cultural pluralism of our society and world (Suzuki, 1982). A society that predetermines the academic potential of students based on their family income, place of residency, home language and parents' type of work is a society that promotes status ranking based on race, color and socioeconomic condition (Persell, 1977). A school community that perceives students of low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse background as not reflecting the preferred values of society is a community that commissions ethnocentrism and preferred sociocultural behaviors (Pantoja, 1975). A school system that uses norm testing to determine, as early as the third grade, which students should participate in the core curricula (college preparatory) and which should receive a compensatory curricula (remedial), is a system that disempowers our students and blocks the academic and social potential of our future economic resources (Cervantes, 1982; Oakes, 1985).

Towards an Educational Empowerment Model

Two separate studies, Barr and Knowles (1986) and Cummins (1986)

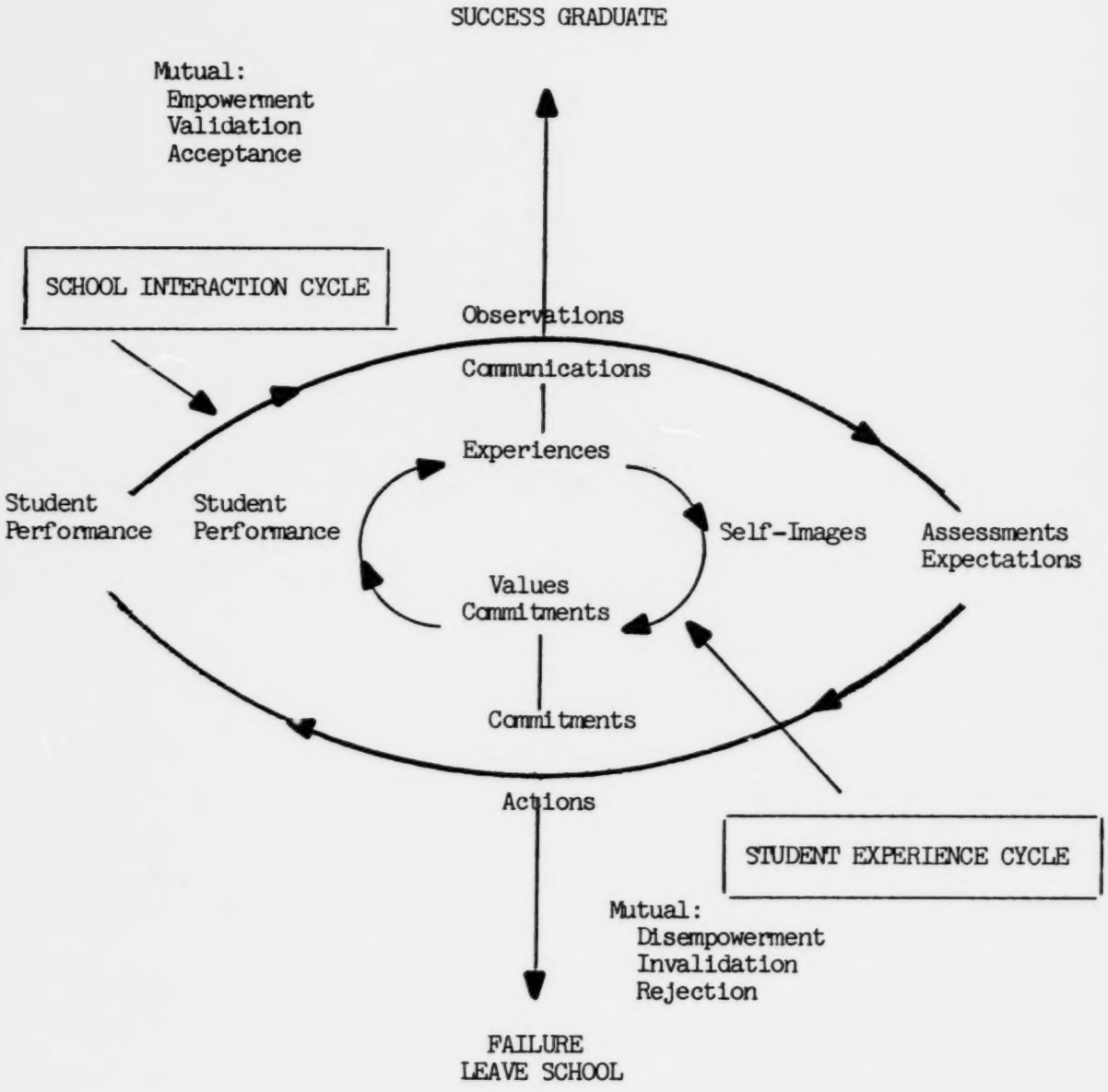
provide similar theoretical frameworks for understanding sets of interactions and power relations that can promote or hinder the success or failure of ethnically diverse and low-income students. These power relations include: (1) classroom interactions between teachers and students; (2) relationships between schools and minority communities; and (3) the intergroup relations within the society as a whole (Cummins, 1986). These interactions reflect policy value directions that can empower or dispower student access to quality education and career options.

Interactions between the student and the school can lead to a teacher empowering or disempowering a student to learn. When interactions of lack of respect, care, and commitment are established by underachieving students and school personnel, success in school deteriorates and poor performance becomes self-reinforcing and self-fulfilling (Wehlage and Rutter, 1985). The opposite holds true, when respect, care and commitment are nurtured, a positive learning environment is maintained and increased. Experiences of success become self-reinforcing and self-fulfilling (Barr & Knowles, 1986; Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968). Furthermore, Barr and Knowles in their 1982-83 "School Leavers Study" found that students who have school performance disadvantages (disempowerment) leave school at rates 10 to 15 times that of students with performance advantage (empowerment).

The "Educational Empowerment Model," illustrated in Figure 1, is described by Barr and Knowles (1986) in the following manner:

> The model incorporates two sets of interactive and cyclically connected factors related to school performance. Depending upon which direction the factors take, positive or negative, a relationship of mutual empowerment or disempowerment between the student and the school is established. Increasingly powerful positive factors interact to produce higher levels of mutual empowerment, successful performance,

FIGURE 1
THE EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT MODEL



Source: Barr, Robert B. and Knowles, Gary W. The 1984-85 School Leaver and High School Diploma Program Participant Attitude Study. San Diego City Schools Research Department, August 1, 1986, pp. 10-14.

and mutual acceptance. This is represented by an upward direction in Figure 1. In time, maintenance of a sufficiently high level of mutual empowerment will lead to a student's graduation. On the other hand, interactions of increasingly powerful negative factors will produce a downward movement toward increasing mutual disempowerment, failing performance, and mutual rejection. In time, a student caught in this spiral will decide to leave school if possible. In this model, every factor is both a cause and an effect and may have either a positive or negative direction.

The inner circle of the figure represents a student's experience cycle of interaction with the school environment. In a positive cycle, good school performances lead to experiences of competence, achievement, and acknowledgement. Positive experiences maintain or improve the student's self-images of his or her abilities and skills and raise his or her self-esteem and confidence levels. These positive images and high self-esteem levels condition the student's school-related values and choices, such as actively participating in class. Positive value commitments lead back to the maintenance or improvement of the student's academic performance.

When the student/school interaction cycle is negative, a student's poor academic performance may lead to lower teacher expectations. Teachers may develop images of the student as having poor abilities, poor attitudes, or learning problems that may be judged to be beyond the teacher's ability to remediate. Attention and assistance are no longer offered. The teacher's commitment becomes reserved for those they believe are willing and able to benefit from it and others may be merely tolerated in the classroom. The student experiencing this lack of teacher commitment loses respect for the teacher and interest in the subject. A cycle of mutual lack of respect, care, and commitment is established between the poorly performing student and the teacher.

A metaphor may help to illustrate further features of the empowerment model. Just as a gyroscope, once brought to a high speed, tends to maintain its speed and stability, so likewise, positive factors once established reinforce each other in a stable, repeating cycle of interactions. Interacting positive factors become self-fulfilling. Like a spinning gyroscope, an established cycle requires only a small amount of outside energy to maintain its momentum. Small additional amounts of energy further improve interactions of factors, making an already effective cycle even more effective.

On the other hand, it takes considerable energy to slow a spinning gyroscope down, stop it, reverse it, and bring it to a high speed in the opposite direction. The empowerment model proposes a similar circumstance with respect to established cycles, whether positive or negative. Established cycles tend to persist and are difficult to stop.

> Good academic performers experience school as a place to demonstrate competence and success. Naturally, an environment providing and enabling success is honored and appreciated by those who are successful in it. Commitment and levels of participation are maintained or increased. Experiences of competence and success become self-reinforcing and self-fulfilling.

As early as the third grade, a significantly large majority of ethnically diverse and low-income students are underachieving in reading and writing and their "at risk" disempowering condition is established. The energy to re-empower students cannot be remediated by compensatory curriculum approaches or federal programs promising new resources. The empowerment process must begin before kindergarten with school/community interventions that redefine equal educational benefits and excellence.

Towards Equal Educational Benefits

Quality education is achieved when all students are empowered with equal access to resources and when these resources are translated to equal expectations. Quality education is enhanced when these expectations are transformed to equal treatment, and when this in turn yields academic outcomes that enables students to attend not only college, but graduate with a college degree--with these students proportionally reflecting the ethnic diversity of the community.

As a society, our policies promote equal access of resources and a tolerance towards linguistic and cultural differences. In reference to the ethnically diverse student, our equity legislation uses such terms as "disadvantaged," "linguistic deficits," and "economically deprived."

In order for school districts to move from the equal access of resources stage to the equal expectations and equal treatment stages, schools must promote educational practices that:

- View the background experiences of the student not as deficits, but as experiences to be used to develop concepts, literacy skills and critical thinking.
- Use testing and diagnostic assessment approaches as tools for identifying the strengths and cognitive needs of students--in order to enrich their cognitive skills and to develop their intellect.
- Recognize that students learn at different rates, through different approaches and learning styles.
- Provide different types of curriculum programs, while maintaining the same standards, core curricula and expectations, to address the diverse academic and linguistic development of students.
- Bring forward credentialed staff that are trained to meet the diverse academic and linguistic learning needs of students.
- Hold school personnel and leadership accountable for effective educational practices that yield academic achievement at grade level.
- Employ accountability systems that monitor short and long-term student achievement.
- Involve parents, students and school personnel to define needs and develop programs that yield effective, relevant and efficient schools.

In education, we advocate sound and effective programs for all students. Our schools must insist on sound, effective, and efficient educational interventions that empower students to pursue higher education and/or a career. Our failure to do so can only lead to social, economic and political disempowerment.

SECTION IV. FRAMEWORK FOR IDENTIFYING THE SCHOOL DROPOUT: A FIVE STAGE CONTINUUM

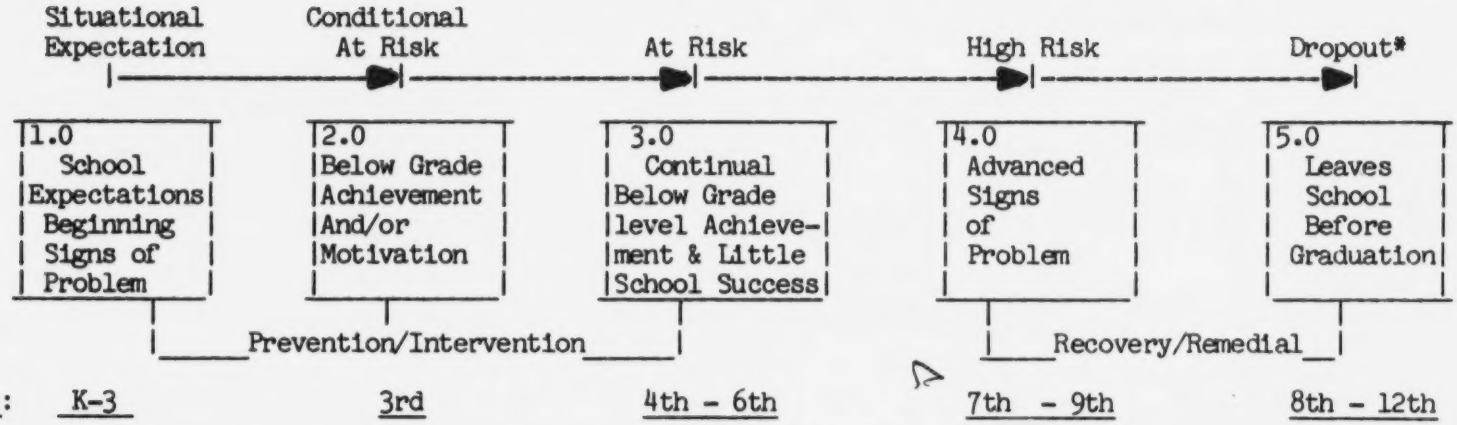
The student who becomes a school dropout is often a result of disempowering community/school/home intervening conditions. These conditions are identifiable through the examination of five stages of social and academic indicators that foster and/or contribute to dropping out of school. These stage are depicted in Figure 2 as: (1) situational expectations, (2) conditional at risk, (3) at risk, (4) high risk and (5) dropout.

The First Stage, "Situational Expectation" is the disempowering process that begins in the kindergarten to third grade level. Through institutional "achievement expectancy bands," our schools use the students' socioeconomic background, home language, parents' profession, and the school-community transiency rate to project initially the school's expected achievement. The student, not being in control of the environment and socioeconomic background, is labeled with a given achievement "expectancy band." Thus, if one is born into a low income family and school-community, the chances of attending a school whose curricula is geared toward the core academic emphasis (college oriented) is slim. Of greater consequence is the the initial low/below grade level achievement expectations that are actualized by the third grade.

The Second Stage, "Conditional At Risk," finds the initial low/below grade level expectations actualized to the point that, as early as the third grade, a large majority of low-income, ethnically diverse students who are fluent English proficient are already underachieving (below grade level) in the content areas of reading and math. Thus the underachievement, disempowering condition triggers the stage of "conditional at risk."

Figure 2

THE STUDENT DROPOUT CONTINUUM**



*Although technically a student dropout leaves school before graduation and does not enroll in a school within 45 days after school departure, the student may also remain in school but has mentally and educationally dropped out.

1.0 School expectations trigger a potential problem for the beginning student.
2.0 Below grade achievement at the third grade signals the visible beginnings of an academic problem.
3.0 Persistance of low academic performance at the 4th to 6th grade levels reflect the beginning signs of an at-risk student.
4.0 The failure to overcome the multivaried problems related to school dropout increases the risk of dropping out.
5.0 The pressures of abandoning school due to lack of support and proper motivation results in the student leaving school before graduation.

** This suggested dropout continuum is not intended to reflect the multivaried and complex factors that result in school dropouts. Home, school and community are factors that positively/negatively impact on the social and academic success of the student.

This stage addresses the underachievement of "conditional at risk" students through a compensatory/remediation education as the prevailing intervention. From a developmental process, it is at the third and fourth grades that the curriculum escalates beyond the development of basic skills and begins to emphasize application and analysis skills. The consequence of this stage is the beginning of educational tracking: compensatory education for underachieving students and the core curricula for achieving students. For the "conditional at risk student," educational remediation actualizes low academic expectations via "expectancy achievement bands" and minimal school accountability.

The Third Stage, "At Risk," is characterized by persistance of low academic performance from the fourth through the sixth grade. Disempowering, low academic expectations are evident through achievement indicators and test results. Grade retention, poor reading, mathematical and writing skills are indicators of the "at risk" student. The consequence of poor academic skills results in the practice of tracking for the "at risk" student. This student is often placed in low achieving tracks under the assumption that "students learn better in groups that are achieving at the same level."

The Fourth Stage, "High Risk," is evident at the seventh through ninth grade, in which the student is often perceived as the source of the problem. The student is seen as a product of an unmotivating home environment, noncompetitive and lacking achievement motivation. This student faces a remedial curriculum, has multivaried academic and socials needs, is frequently overaged and, generally, is performing poorly in school. The consequence of this stage is that the "high risk" student is characterized as being alienated, distanced from school activities, in conflict

with school authority, and underachieving academically. Of importance is the notion that many of these students will not dropout of school, but continue to perform poorly in academic work, passing given district minumum standards to obtain their high school diploma.

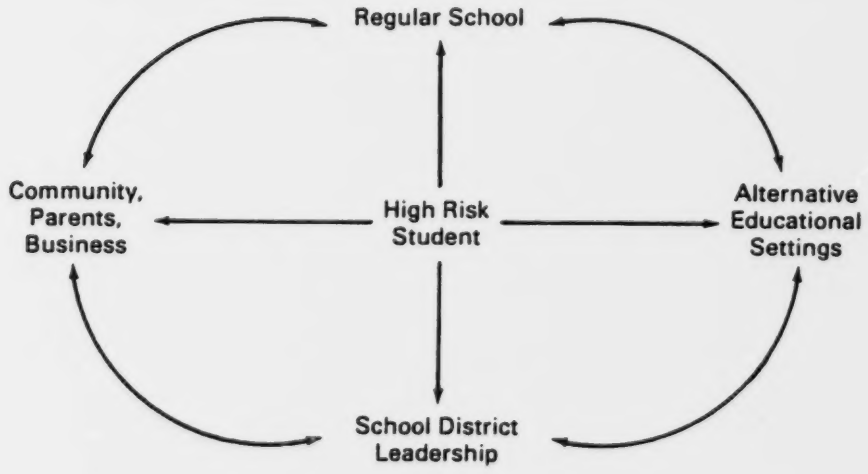
The Last Stage, "Dropout," is characterized by the student reaching a point in which coping with school is no longer a concern. This student abandons school due to a number of conditions such as poor academic performance (which can be related to low curricular expectations, instructional practices, and social relationships and interactions), school nonattendance, discipline problems, feeling of alienation from the school, feeling of not belonging, inability to cope with the structure of the school, dislike of school classes/teacher's perceptions and low self esteem, problems related to health (pregnancy, emotional, physical) alcohol or drug related abuse, need to work, and early marriage.

A main consequence of dropping out of school is the cost encumbered by society and the cost to school district base funds. The California State Department of Education (1985) estimates a loss of base funds of $1.1 billion each year, coupled with the cost of an additional $4.2 billion annually in federal and state resources on programs serving approximately 3.5 million high risk youth. Such services include health, mental, employment, rehabilitation, youth authority, alcohol and drug abuse, and social services. These amounts are in addition to the cost of services provided through County Welfare community organizations and United Way. At a national level, estimates of lost lifetime earnings exceed $200,000 per individual dropout and $200 billion for each school class across the United States (Catteral, 1986).

SECTION V. WORKING TOGETHER TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

The solutions for the prevention of the high risk/dropout student reside not only in the school, but also with the home, the community, the business sector, and in each individual who lives in that school's community. All of these role groups must work together to provide positive school learning opportunities that develop the full potential of students and prevent the failure of students as described in the "dropout continuum." Figure 3 illustrates the interrelationship of how each setting--community, regular school, alternative educational settings, and school district can influence the services provided to the high risk student.

Figure 3



Community-School-Home Involvement Needs Assessment

In operationalizing the initial involvement of each of the four role groups the following questions serve as a needs assessment process to determine the plan of action and available support.

° The Regular Schools (Traditional)

Has an assessment of each school in the district been undertaken to see where they stand regarding their percentages of school dropouts? Which schools are successful? Which schools have the largest dropout percentages? What is the learning climate of each school? Which schools are exemplary and models for the rest of the district? What are their characteristics? What is the student composition of each school? Does it have a relationship to the dropout problem? Does the educational leadership style of the school have a relationship to the problem? How about parent involvement? What are the perceived school, community, student factors and/or conditions that contribute to the problem?

° Alternative Educational Settings

Are there any alternative educational schools serving the students in the district? Any alternative-to-suspension centers for high risk students? Any summer schools for high-risk students? Any instruction for home bound students? Are there teenage parent programs for pregnant teenagers not wishing to remain on the regular school campus? Are there other alternative learning centers? Are there teachers, administrators and interested parents wishing to establish alternative learning centers for high risk students? Do they have the support of the administration and the school board? Is there a team of interested and committed teachers and administrators to prepare the

school mission, goals and objectives of a new nonregular school adapted to the needs of high risk students?

° School District Leadership

What is the district's policy on school dropouts? What data base is there to formulate a district policy? What district efforts have been made to assist school sites in the prevention of school dropouts? Is there a comprehensive staff development program for the identification, assessment and implementation of exemplary practices regarding high risk students? Is the counseling department providing support services for students at risk of dropping out? Are there district wide programs for high risk students? Is there a district dropout coordinator with the necessary financial and personnel resources to address the distict-wide problem?

° Parents, Community Organizations and Business/Industry/Labor

Is there a partnership with parents, community organizations, business, industry and labor sectors to counter the problem of school dropouts? What contacts have been made? Has the leadership in these sectors been identified? What counseling programs have been established in the community? Are there job placement opportunities? Have tutoring centers been established? Do schools or district have outreach programs that have linkages to the Juvenile Court Administration and the police? Are there drug prevention centers, community guidance centers and student crisis centers? Is there a parent training/education effort regarding parent involvement in schooling of their children? What are the resources, in terms of financial, personnel and leadership committed to these efforts? Is there a School Attendance Review Board (SARB)?

Analysis of School Practices and Student Needs

The analysis of possible factors, conditions and variables that contribute to the high risk/dropout student at the K-12 level should also be addressed by school personnel with respect to institutional and educational practices. This analysis suggests a needs assessment that examines school practices that can empower or disempower the "at risk" student. Eleven areas of analysis are suggested:

1. Institutional Expectations--who defines them? What impact do institutional expectations have on school achievement, school leadership, students, and parents? How do negative institutional expectations impact student achievement? How equitable are institutional expectations with respect to student characteristics such as race, sex, national origin, socioeconomic background and handicapping conditions?
2. Administrative Leadership--what should be the role of the school site administrator in addressing the short term and long term academic and linguistic needs of high risk students? What role should the school site administrator take in reallocating available resources to address student underachievement? What should be expected of the district/school site administrator with respect to student achievement profiles, staffing instructional programs, establishing academic expectations, community involvement, and curriculum resources in order to address student needs? What is the role of the school site administrator in promoting and monitoring student achievement?
3. Diagnostic Practices--how effective are diagnostic practices in identifying the linguistic and academic proficiency of students in their first and second language? What practices hinder or promote appro-

priate identification of student's linguistic and academic developmental needs? How are the academic and linguistic developmental needs of students addressed by instructional programs/curriculum?

4. Instructional Programs--what types of programs address the academic and linguistic development of students? What are the educational conditions that are necessary for such instructional programs to have a fair chance of success? What types of instructional and staffing approaches are triggered by each type of identified program?

5. Curriculum--how does the curriculum mesh with instructional programs? What instructional materials address the various academic and linguistic needs of students? What instructional materials address the cognitive development of students in their primary and secondary language? How is the curriculum designed to promote grade level proficiency of skills? What is the interrelationship between the curriculum provided to underachieving students and their available career options? Is the curriculum appropriately designed to enable students to cognitively transfer skills from their first language to the English language?

6. Staffing-- what are the necessary staffing needs in order to deliver the appropriate instructional programs to students as based on their academic and linguistic needs? How are the district's hiring practices addressing the demographic trends of the district as it plans three, five and ten years in advance? What are the staff development practices that are addressing the underachievement of students? What planning, coordination, and training is undertaken by the district and teacher training institutions in addressing student demographic trends and underachievement? What should be the competencies that

any credentialed teacher working with ethnically diverse students needs to demonstrate with respect to their ability to teach, work and impact the scholastic achievement of these students?

7. Environmental School Factors/Expectations--what school and classroom conditions are necessary in order to have a positive learning climate? What practices promote positive student expectation and achievement? What structural resources and conditions are necessary in order to provide safe, orderly, and high student achievement expectations?
8. Counseling and Guidance--what guidance and counseling practices are necessary to prevent tracking of students? What counseling practices provide students with the broadest possible information as to career choices? What guidance support services address the early underachievement of students? What preventive support services are available that address early identification of student underachievement?
9. Parent Involvement/Relations--what school site policies promote active parent participation? What school site practices promote active home school involvement with respect to student achievement? What should be the role of parents in providing academic and social support of their children? How can school-home expectations serve to promote positive student expectations?
10. Educational Quality Control--what are the ongoing mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of: (a) administrative school-site services, (b) diagnostic practices, (c) school expectations, (d) instructional programs, (e) staff, (f) environmental school factors and climate, (g) counseling and guidance, (h) parent involvement and relations, (i) fiscal allocation of available resources, and

(j) school structural standards and conditions? What are the short (1 to 2 years) and long (2 to 5 years) student achievement expectations of the district, of the school and of the classroom?

11. Fiscal Allocation--how is the ADA generated by low income Hispanics and ethnically diverse students being allocated to impact their academic achievement? While categorical funds provide support resources to improve instructional services, in what ways are such funds preempting the district from using ADA funds to address the underachievement of students?

Towards A Collaborative Intervention Process

Before suggesting a process for developing a school dropout prevention plan for addressing the identification, intervention, prevention, retention, and recovery components of such a plan, the acceptance of a collaborative intervention process involving parents, community organizations, business/industry/labor, and school leadership is imperative. The literature on planned intervention outlines the following points on collaboration for any school or district to keep in mind when undertaking the complex problem of the high risk/dropout student (Clasky, et al., 1973):

1. Why collaborate? To give people more voice in an institution that affects them. To reduce the feeling of powerlessness and alienation resulting from unresponsive bureaucracies. To contribute to a "sense of community." To improve and coordinate the ways schools utilize community resources to enrich the school program and the planning and evalution of school programs.
2. What conditions are necessary for effective collaboration? People have a personal, group, and community interest in the problems.

People identify with a problem or goal and begin to prescribe a solution. People have a base of support and feel competent as a group. People operate in an environment where there is a supportive climate and collaboration.

3. What skills are necessary? Communication skills and the ability to exchange ideas, information, and accept criticisms, group dynamics skills between person to group, and group to group. Planning and leadership skills in defining problems, setting goals, examining alternatives, designing a strategy, assessing resource needs, and designing the evaluation.
4. How do we judge success? Successful collaboration can be measured in terms of purposes for school/community collaboration, e.g., through number/types of people involved, in planning, evaluating, and implementing school programs. It can also be measured by the number of opportunities for contributions, indicators of increased interaction and cooperative action, evidence of a comprehensive plan for public participation, and number/type of programs and personnel available to students. While addressing the above four issues, the participants must keep in mind that educational interventions involve the willingness on the part of the decision-makers to engage in shared problem solving and participant oriented leadership at the community and district levels, in order to arrive at effective, efficient and relevant solutions that will improve the lives of at risk and high risk students.

SECTION VI. PROCESS FOR THE IDENTIFICATION, PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHOOL DROPOUT PREVENTION PLAN

A twelve phase process is suggested to address the identification, planning, development and implementation of a school dropout prevention/recovery plan. These phases are interdependent of one another and form an integrative process for developing a comprehensive prevention/recovery plan. This process is illustrated in Figure 4 on the following page. The unique features of the process include:

°DATA BASE: The plan should be solidly founded on research data gathered from the district and other studies, which give an empirical base for the development and implementation of the plan.

°CONTEXT EMBEDDED: Although based on research, studies and district data, the plan should directly address the contextual conditions of the district. Data and research are cross-validated with all those involved in the dropout prevention plan.

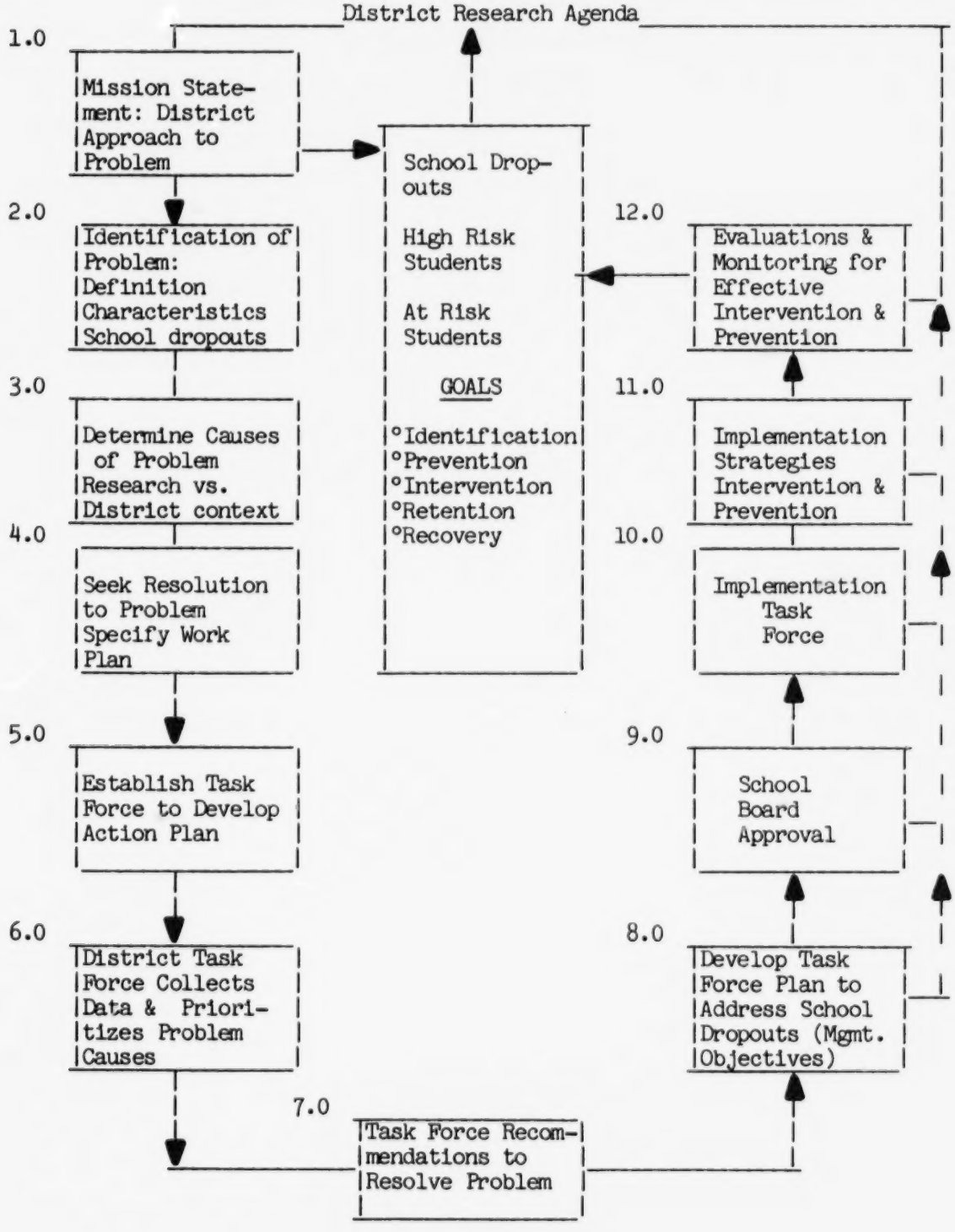
°OWNERSHIP: A plan will either fail or succeed depending on the key factor of ownership. Each school must have its own stamp of ownership in the planning process. Within each school, the principal, the teaching staff, parents and students (where possible) must be involved in each stage of the planning process.

°COMPREHENSIVE: The problem of school dropouts is extremely complex. There are no simple solutions or approaches. One may address the problem of school dropouts with a piecemeal approach and not address the key causes of the problem. The suggested process calls for a comprehensive and integrative approach that includes schools, community, business/industry/labor sectors working together to resolve the problem.

°QUALITY CONTROL: The plan is organized and planned to include quality controls throughout each planning phase to assure flexibility, effectiveness and accountability in the process.

FIGURE 4

PROCESS IN THE PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT/IMPLEMENTATION
OF A SCHOOL DROPOUT PREVENTION PLAN



Phase 1.0 MISSION STATEMENT

The foundation for the planning process lies in the mission statement. The problem of school dropout must be accepted by the total district, including the school board, superintendent, administration, site principals, teachers and parents. The mission statement includes an acceptance of the problem by the key leadership and policy makers of the district. (See Appendix A. Sample Mission Statement). It is the problem of all concerned. The policy statement simply assures the total district commitment: first, by recognizing the severity of the problem, and second, by giving it priority and providing the needed resources, personnel and time to ascertain the problem.

Action steps to be taken:

1.1 District makes commitment to address the problem

1.2 District selects approach to the problem

1.2.1 A piecemeal approach -- seeks to address the problem without considering the chief causes of the problem

1.2.2 A comprehensive approach -- involving parents, students and school

1.2.3 An integrative approach -- involving parents, students, school, community including business/industry/labor sectors

Phase 2.0 IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

The issue and concern of school dropouts is a very difficult and complex problem. Before a school district can address this problem it must be recognized first. This phase is characterized by the district's awareness of a large number of students dropping out of school before graduation and home/community/school related conditions contributing to this predicament. The key aspects of this phase are the following:

° An alarm concerning the serious problem of school dropouts.

° An informal assessment is made regarding the increasing number of the high risk students who may eventually dropout.

° The district assesses the national, state and its own local trends of student underachievement and school dropouts.

° The district makes the determination to address the problem.

Action steps to be taken:

2.1 Develop a long-range research agenda

2.2 Develop an action oriented process to operationalize the short and long-term research agenda

2.2.1 Define the problem

2.2.2 Define high risk/school leaver/dropout student (See Appendix B. Definition of a School Dropout)

2.2.3 Establish criteria for identification of "conditional-risk," "at risk," "high risk" and "dropout" students

2.2.4 Identify characteristics of at risk students based on research (as stated in Section II)

2.2.5 Cross-validate student characteristics within the sociocultural context of the school district

Phase 3.0 CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM

Once the problem of school dropouts is recognized by the school district, the next logical step is the determination of the root causes of the problem. The review of the literature and current studies on dropouts give ample causes of school dropouts. (See section II, Selected Review of the Literature.) The district should review these sources and seek to identify those which would be applicable to their particular district. The district may initiate a study on school dropouts to acquire a data base informational profile on the causes of school dropouts. This phase may include the following:

° A critical need for further information on the problem

- A need for a study on dropouts.
- A need for data base information on dropouts.
- Search for identification and causes of the problem.
- A review of current literature on causes of dropouts

A review of national, state and district studies on high risk students and dropouts strongly suggests that the situation is grave and will become more so in the future (Zachman, 1986). The seriousness of the problem is based on the increasing number of high risk students both through the sheer force of demographic changes and the failure of educational policy and practices to adequately address many of the causes and conditions driving the problem. Furthermore, the review of the literature on high risk students suggests that the inability of policymakers and practitioners to mitigate the underachievement and structural school conditions is not the result of an insufficiency of data on which to base policy decisions and program strategies. Neither is it the result of a lack of resources with which to address many of the school-related aspects of the problem. The inability stems from failure to incorporate data into policy decisions regarding program direction and resource allocations.

Section II provided an executive report of 46 related studies on the high risk student. The research also reveals that the causes of the school dropouts are complex, varied and multidimensional. A school can begin to explore some of the more common causes which include:

- Low grades and/or low academic proficiency skills
- Low teacher expectations as based on "school achievement expectancy bands"
- Tracking of students by ability grouping
- Personal problems, such as teenage pregnancy, drugs and alcohol abuse.
- Little support from parents, school and peers to remain in school

- ° Organizational, structural, and institutional disempowering conditions
- ° Policies and procedures of City Councils and other local and state legislative bodies which negatively impact on educational facilities and services

Action steps to be taken:

3.1 Operationalize a long range research agenda

3.2 Develop district data base for documenting causes as based on existing research and district socio-cultural context

3.3 Identify the sample

3.4 Develop and field test the survey to identify "causes" as perceived by district study

3.5 Implement the survey and data collection

3.6 Analyze the data

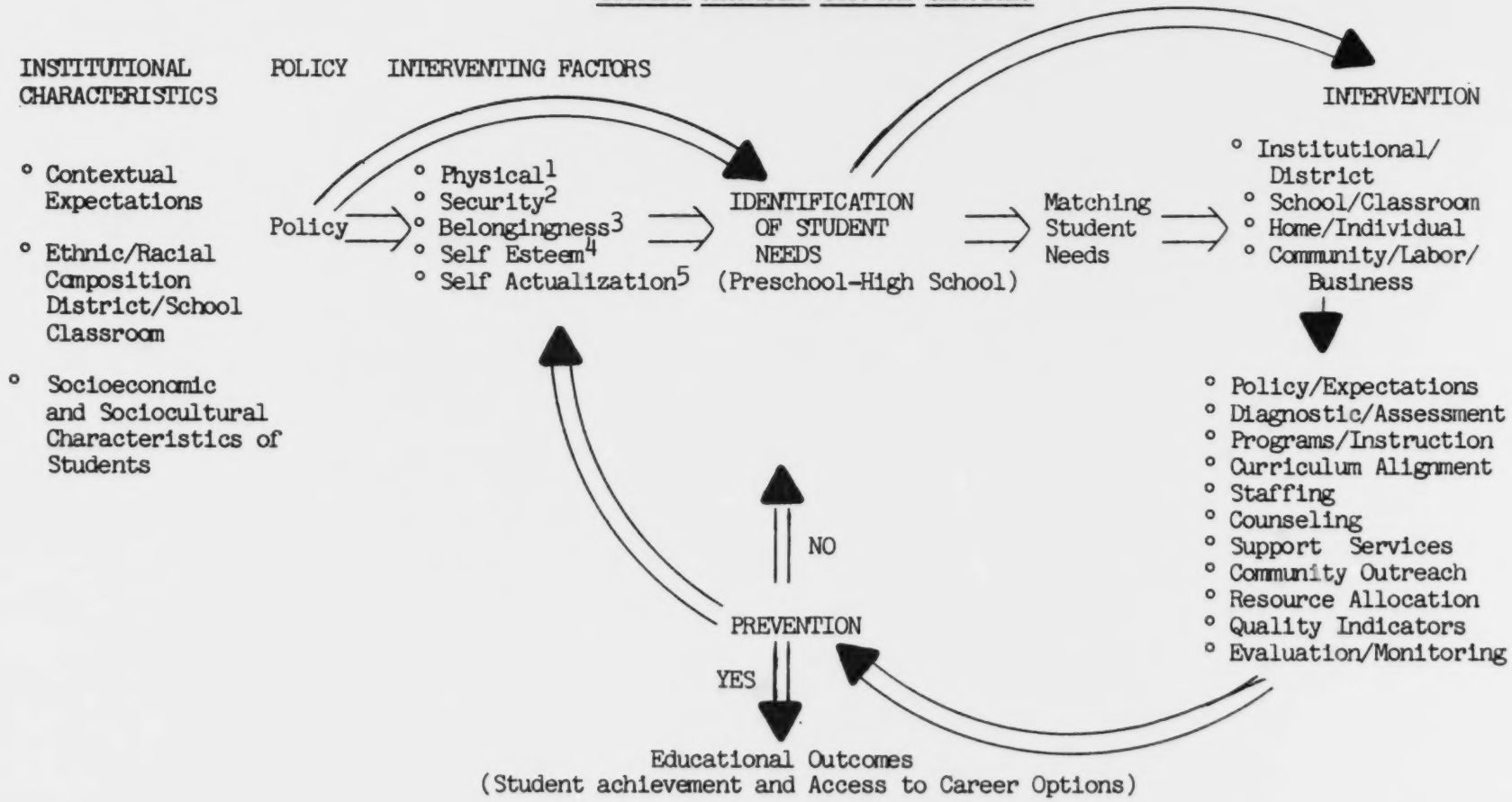
3.7 Report the data

Phase 4.0 RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

Any serious attempt to change the existing conditions contributing to the high risk/dropout student must undertake a comprehensive approach in seeking to resolve this complex problem. Figure 5 on the following page outlines a series of components that are interrelated for the prevention of school dropouts. These components include: 1) A district policy, 2) Identification of students, 3) Matching students needs with program interventions, 4) Prevention processes that monitor the effectiveness of the interventions, 5) Retention indicators that monitor student outcomes, and 6) Recovery of students leaving school and interventions necessary to improve their career options.

These six components are based on policies that are guided by the following principles of quality education. That all students have the right:

FIGURE 5
PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE 12
STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES



1. Structural/Expectations/ Nutrition: Benefit to Student
2. Safety/ School Climate/ Community Conditions/ Attitude/Freedom from Harm
3. Sociocultural support via Policy, Programs and Practices/ Positive locus of participation Individual respect/ Positive human interaction
4. Social and academic support systems via Significant others/ Role models/ Career options/ Programs that promote self-esteem and self respect/ /Full participation in school curricula
5. Grade level achievement and school success as indicators of school/home/community expectations

- To learn, achieve and succeed.
- To a learning environment that helps them to actualize their optimal potential.
- To have competent teachers and administrators.
- To high academic expectations and to achieve at grade level or better.
- To contextually relevant educational experiences that are conceptually based.
- To a school structure, learning climate, academic environment and resources that are equal in quality within and across districts.
- To bilingual-multicultural education.
- To a culturally pluralistic education for developing skills to properly function in a pluralistic society.

In addition, all students are different and have diverse needs and:

- Require basic knowledge skills and experiences necessary for developing physically, cognitively, and affectively.
- Need to go through developmental stages that shape their intellectual, emotional and social skills.

While these policies and components appear general in application, they serve as key guides in providing a programmatic framework for long and short term approaches in the effective prevention of school dropouts.

Action steps to be taken:

4.1 Specify the district's value position (short & long term)

4.2 Determine the district's work plan resources and personnel's commitment to confront the problem

4.3 Develop short and long range management process and approach to prevent school dropouts

Phase 5.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ACTION PLAN TASK FORCE

The research study on the district's school dropouts has been completed and the data has been analyzed together with state and national trends relating to school dropouts. Based on this valuable information

and significant trends, a task force will be selected from the district and community representing those key individuals who have the interest, the commitment and proven expertise to address the major causes of the school dropout as indicated by the research study. The members will subdivide into subcommittees to address the major causes of school dropouts.

A task force of board members, central administration, principals, teachers, high school students, parents, and business/industry/labor representatives will constitute the membership of this group. The suggested criteria for their selection should include the following:

- Demonstrated expertise and leadership relating to school dropout prevention.
- Interest and commitment to assist in the prevention of high risk students and dropout problem.
- Receptive to new ideas and/or in assisting in the prevention of high risk students.

Once the members of the Dropout Prevention Task Force have been selected, the Superintendent and the Board of Education should officially commission the task force to its function of preparing and developing a comprehensive dropout prevention plan. (See Appendix C. San Diego City Schools Dropout Prevention Roundtable).

Some of the important functions that the task force members must accomplish first are the following:

- Understand their role as members of the Dropout Prevention Task Force.
- Select a Chairperson from among the members of the task force.
- Establish timelines for completing the designated tasks.
- Study and review the district's research study on school dropouts.
- Assign task force members into subcommittees.

Action steps to be taken:

5.1 Establish purpose and rationale for the Task Force

5.2 Establish criteria for member selection

5.3 Select a task force to include district personnel, parents, students, and community/business/labor

5.4 Train and orient members to the goals and objectives of the task force based on Phase I and II

Phase 6.0 DISTRICT COLLECTION OF DATA

The district has valuable information on file which can be utilized for addressing the school dropout. The following items are suggested areas of data collection that can be related to high risk students or school dropouts.

- Students who are one to two grades below GPA
- Students suspended/expeled several times a year
- Students have who been held back one or two school years
- Students overage at the elementary, junior, and high school levels
- Students who are tracked in low academic performance groups
- Other information related to the cause of dropping out of school

The above information can be easily collected and analyzed for programmatic planning for intervention purposes relating to high risk students.

Action steps to be taken:

6.1 Prioritize the district's problem "causes" to be addressed

6.2 Subcommittees are formed to identify and cross-validate the causes

6.3 Task force focuses on prioritized areas ("causes") and are subdivided into subcommittees to address:

6.3.1 Validating each identified problem area within district context

6.3.2 Documenting restraining and driving forces related to each identified problem area

6.3.3 Identifying proactive approaches to address each identified problem "cause"

6.4 Identify appropriate approaches for data collection

6.5 Set timelines/responsibilities/activities

6.6 Collect data for each identified significant cause of the problem

6.7 Analyze the findings

Phase 7.0 TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The data collection, together with the study on dropout prevention, will yield valuable information pointing to the district's root causes of the problem. The recommendations will be based on this data to give validity to the proposed solutions or plan.

Action steps to be taken:

7.1 Subcommittees identify and document recommendations to address each problem "cause"

7.2 Subcommittees establish goals and objectives for each problem cause for plan development

7.2.1 Objectives are data based, focused on goals, short and long range, and address the root of the problem

Phase 8.0 THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACTION PLAN

Once the task force has been selected and members assigned subcommittees, the writing of the action plan can focus on the issues mentioned in the following sections.

° Regular Schools

This subcommittee will begin an in-depth study of each school in the district to determine the successful and unsuccessful practices in the district. It will analyze the district data on school dropouts

and identify the schools which have the largest percentage of school dropouts and examine its causes. It will pose those questions found in Section V relating to regular schools. It will finally make recommendations to the task force for changing, adapting or developing programs that will impact on the prevention of school dropouts.

° Alternative Educational Schools

Members in this group will seek to establish new creative, innovative ideas which are not possible within the scope of regular schools to stem the tide of school dropouts. The key factor will be the formation of a team of teachers and administrators who will be the nucleus in establishing the new policies, goals and objectives of the alternative school to address the needs of high risk students. It will seek to address the major issues regarding alternative schools. Its final task will be to suggest the establishment of new educational school settings which will prevent students from dropping out of school and realize the student's full social, academic and psychological needs.

° School District Leadership

The leadership support and commitment by the central administration will mean the difference between the success and failure of an effective implementation dropout prevention plan. Members in this group will focus on school related issues such as fiscal resources, personnel, support systems. The key responsibility of this group will be guiding and supporting the task force to develop a comprehensive dropout prevention plan. This task group needs to examine, identify and operationalize key policies neccessary for the success of the prevention plan. It will also provide the leadership by keeping abreast of research on the causes and prevention of school dropouts

and implementing district programs that can guide and support schools in dropout prevention efforts.

° Community, Organizations, Parents and Business/Industry/Labor

This group will concentrate on building a network between the schools and various sectors of the community, in particular with parents. No dropout prevention plan can be successful without the active involvement of parents. The parent/community issues and concerns will be the focus of this group. The task of this subcomittee will be the active participation of community members in the development and implementation of the plan.

Action steps to be taken:

8.1 Task force subcommittees operationalize goals and objectives with respect to grade level clusters: pre-school to 3rd grade; 4th to 6th grade; 7th to 8th grade; 9th to 12th grade and they specify the following:

8.1.1 Identification of at risk student needs: Diagnostic criteria, processes/approaches

8.1.2 Prevention of at risk students: Policies/ processes/ approaches specifying what needs to be in place

8.1.3 Intervention of at risk students: Programs/ resources/ personnel necessary to implement interventions

8.1.4 Retention: Processes/support systems/accountability that monitors student progress and needed interventions

8.1.5 Recovery: Holding power indicators/accountability/ process/programs necessary to provide alternative assistance to the high risk student

8.2 Task force subcommittees develop action plan for each major school-community component specifying:

8.2.1 Identification of strategies/programs/approaches

8.2.2 Identification of district/school personnel responsible for activities

8.2.3 Identification of personnel/resources necessary for plan implementation

8.2.4 Identification of accountability indicators and evaluation criteria

8.3 Task force consolidates subcommittee action plan for district dropout prevention/recovery

Phase 9.0 SCHOOL BOARD APPROVAL OF PLAN

From the initial planning and development of the plan, board members are encouraged to be involved and be active members of the Planning Task Force. This will later facilitate board approval of the plan.

Action steps to be taken:

9.1 Board members are presented with (a) the nature of the problem of school dropouts that confronts the district; (b) the importance of addressing and resolving the problem; (c) the techniques for using the recommendations for the planning/development/implementation of the action prevention plan

9.2. The task force formally presents action plan for approval

9.3 The school board approves school dropout prevention plan

9.4 The school board allocates resources to implement school dropout prevention plan

(See Appendix C for a sample of San Diego City Schools Dropout Prevention Roundtable Recommendations.)

Phase 10.0 IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

The key aspects of this important phase are:

° The selection of a district dropout plan coordinator

° The selection of a council to advise the dropout coordinator

° The establishment of school site teams to implement the five levels of the dropout prevention action plan a) early identification, b) prevention of high risk students, c) program intervention, d) retention support systems, and e) recovery approaches at the junior and senior high

levels.

Once the plan has been prepared, developed and reviewed by all key individuals and groups representing a cross-section of those who will affect the implementation of the plan, the plan then faces its most formidable task, an effective implementation strategy and process. The key factors in the implementation process are:

- A claimed ownership by the key implementing persons, such as the principal, the teacher, the parent and the student.
- A flexibility in the plan to allow for the unique circumstance of each school in the district.
- The support and commitment by the superintendent and school board in terms of fiscal and personnel resources.
- The timelines are realistic and tasks have accountability indicators.
- The school, community, parents, business and public service agencies pool their resources and efforts to support the implementation process.

Action steps to be taken:

10.1 District establishes an implementation task force to oversee ongoing implementation of the plan, with subcommittees that focus on:

10.1.1 Regular school interventions to address causes related to regular school programs

10.1.2 Nonregular school interventions to address causes that can be remedied by nontraditional school programs

10.1.3 Central administration practices to remedy causes related to policies and support services administered by the district central office

10.1.4 Parent/community interventions to accost causes that can be remedied by the involvement and active participation of parents, community, business/industry/labor sectors

10.2 The task force establishes a mechanism for an effective implementation of each component of the action plan

10.3 The district and school sites identify a team of specialists, experts consultants to implement and oversee each component of the action plan

10.4 The district establishes accountability indicators in the implementation of the plan

10.5 The timelines and persons responsible for each component of the plan are clearly established

10.6 The board members are systematically and periodically informed of each phase of the implementation aspect of the action plan

Phase 11.0 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Appendix D provides an instrument to identify the profile of programs/project interventions that impact a given student need, grade level, and skill area. The intent of this instrument is to provide the school district with data on the available interventions being implemented.

What works for at risk students? What was done (interventions applied), to whom and with what effect? Are the interventions directly impacting at risk students or staff? Are community interventions family focused, or organizationally focused? Are programs for at risk students academically oriented or are they remedial or enrichment based? Are they vocational in orientation? If so, are they for career exploration, work study, or career orientation? While any program, curriculum, or learning approach can be related to the dropout problem, the need to specify, document, and properly identify the pedagogical value of any given intervention is imperative if we are to prevent rather than remediate the problem (Mann, 1985).

Action steps to be taken:

11.1 Implementation of district and school site strategies, program approaches address:

11.1.1 The identification of high risk students

11.1.2 Intervention strategies/programs which will impact dropout/recovery

11.1.3 Prevention programs that address the root causes of the problem

11.1.4 The retention (holding power) of students

11.1.5 Alternative/creative strategies for the recovery of students

Phase 12.0 THE EVALUATION AND MONITORING OF ACTION PLAN

The action plan must be effectively evaluated and monitored if it is to be operationalized. Important areas include: 1) actualizing the mission statement through management objectives that specify expected outcomes; 2) establishing timelines and identifying personnel responsible for each action plan component and tasks; 3) accounting for the necessary resources and personnel to implement each of the the five levels of the dropout prevention action plan: a) identification of the at-risk student, b) prevention strategies for the at-risk student, c) program interventions to address the at risk student at the K-6 or k-12 grade level, d) retention support systems for the at-risk student, and e) recovery approaches for the at-risk student; 4) providing for the development/ recruitment/hiring of personnel trained to address the academic and linguistic needs of at-risk student; 5) accounting for structural school conditions (size, library space, playground space, multipurpose space, etc) that hinder or promote a supportve learning climate, and (6) providing for the ongoing assessment of student development, and growth (cognitive, affective, psychomotor, volitional).

The overall evaluation and monitoring process of the action plan should keep in mind the educational evaluation components that address context (student needs), content (curriculum), process (management and delivery of interventions) and product (attainment and impact) outcomes of what is expected in terms of student development and academic achievement.

Action steps to be taken:

12.1 The district implements an evaluation process based on expected outcomes to determine the success/effectiveness of each major component of the action plan addressing: a) Identification, b) Prevention, c) Intervention, d) Retention and (e) Recovery.

12.2 School sites form Dropout Prevention Teams (DPT) involving the principal, teachers, parents and students to evaluate the school intervention strategies and programs at their school community.

12.3 Using instruments appropriate for the school site, covering the components of the action plan, data is collected and documented on a semester and annual basis for short and long term analysis and impact.

12.4 The data and documentation is analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the strategies and programs of each major component of the action plan addressing: a) Identification, b) Prevention, c) Intervention, d) Retention and e) Recovery.

12.5 The findings are used to revise, change, modify aspects of each major component of the action plan addressing the a) identification, b) prevention, c) intervention, d) retention, e) recovery components.

12.6 The evaluation process is ongoing and used as a tool to make policy and programmatic decisions.

SECTION VII. SOME SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS: SCHOOL DISTRICT-PARENT-COMMUNITY

In the prevention of the high risk/dropout student early school intervention is imperative. Furthermore, research has clearly shown that the school, and the individual teacher in particular, can produce high risk youth, with their disruptive behavior. This research also suggests that both may also contribute to the prevention of such negative behavior (Polk & Schafer, 1972; Ascher, 1982; Wehlage, 1985).

Likewise, the attitudes and expectations of the schools and teachers in the prevention of the high risk student/school dropout is critical. Research suggests that certain teachers consistently experience disruptions in their classrooms while others have little difficulty, even with so called "troublesome" students. Additionally, studies have shown that school and teacher attitudes/expectations can have significant impact on the learning potential of students. If the school, and specifically the teacher, has a negative perception of the learning capability of the student, the student will not perform up to potential. Thus, there is a need for increasing the school's and teacher's awareness of the learning potential of ethnically diverse and language minority students.

Six areas of interventions are suggested for increasing the school's and teacher's awareness of the needs of the at risk student. These interventions also cover curriculum, support services, financial management, and parent/teacher/principal interventions. Many of the suggested interventions are derived from the 1986 publication of the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education entitled, "Drawing a Blueprint for Success."

School District Policy Interventions

In the development of the school dropout prevention plan, the following considerations are imperative for programs that seek the prevention of at risk students:

° Development and implementation of relevant and tangible interventions skills that develop skills connected with income earning jobs.

° Programs and a school climate that promote the development of self-esteem, intimacy, recognition and self-preservation skills necesssary to succeed in school and society.

° Strong student input so that young people participate in the development and implementation of programs that meet their individual needs.

° Formulation of effective networks with community groups and agencies, including medical personnel, employers, unions and community youth workers.

° Hiring of committed staff who seek the assignment to work with at risk students.

° Public information designed to improve community understanding of the problem and develop public commitment to serving the diversity of at risk students.

° Program and curriculum networks that support, strengthen and expand the impact of individual interventions designed to prevent at risk students.

° Appropriate accountability and monitoring systems that provide incentives to students, teachers, and schools to achieve program goals.

Student Interventions

A variety of approaches to identify at risk students is essential for early intervention to counteract the dropout rate. These include:

° Involve teachers as members of a team identifying students who are at risk.

° Look at the whole school population when identifying students who are at risk.

° Use objective criteria and procedures that are multidimensional.

° Find creative ways to identify at-risk students--beware of inaccurate data and cross validate identification procedures.

- Look for the invisible dropouts--those whose imaginations have dropped out while their bodies are present.
- Design the program to involve students in positive ways for self-development.
- Enable the development of students' self-image and self-esteem.
- Allow students to choose their own advisers and/or counselors.
- Encourage students to develop problem solving skills and to resolve their own problems.
- Help students feel needed and contributors to their own development.
- Help students grow emotionally and socially as well as academically.
- Develop positive peer culture to counteract negative street culture.
- Help students set and achieve realistic goals for themselves, so that they are accountable for their own growth and progress.
- Increase freedom and responsibility a little bit at a time.
- Make the connection between success in school and success in later life.

Curriculum Interventions

In a student-centered program, the design and the curriculum must meet the students' needs.

- Enable teachers and students to design the curriculum--while providing for time, support, resources, and regulations.
- Emphasize affective education in the program and curriculum.
- Develop a competency-based curriculum--rather than a conveyor belt program.
- Expand the curriculum beyond minimum competencies and basic skills to the full range of higher order skills and problem solving possibilities.
- Offer choices and make the curriculum meaningful to the students' reality and context here and now.
- Help students see the uses of what they learn--provide for the application of skills.
- Design curriculum and instruction to fit the individual learning style of the student. Recognize that students have different learning styles.

- Offer career and life planning in the curriculum.
- Allow for continuous progress and transition classes rather than retention.
- Allow students to set and achieve goals, sometimes formalized in a contract.
- Provide job training, part-time jobs and other work exploration--develop career experience.
- Involve business in developing apprenticeship, internship and other work experience programs.
- Merge work opportunities with the curriculum for total learning.
- Design a flexible schedule for those unable to attend school during usual school hours.
- Allow for year-round, open entry-open exit programs.
- Allow students to enter adult education at age 16.

Personalized Student Support

As the program and the curriculum need to be student-centered, the instructional approach provided to the student must also be personalized to meet the students' needs.

- Personalize education--recognizing that the student is different.
- Identify what motivates each student and use it in the job, sport, art, music and computer programs.
- Allow sufficient planning time for teachers individually and in teams.
- Emphasize teachers doing instructional tasks. Provide staff support for routine paper work and duties.
- Develop alternative instructional strategies to enable students to succeed and stay in school, when other strategies cease to work.
- Maintain a low adult-student ratio--1:15 maximum. Small is good, large loses.
- Provide noncompetitive instruction; encourage cooperative group learning.
- Provide tutoring in the evenings and on weekends.
- Provide individualized instruction and multiple instructional groupings, varying in size in one room.

- Enable instruction to occur in multiple locations in each community.
- Cluster collaborators in small units to work as a team, so students can feel they belong.
- Use a multimedia instructional approach.
- Evaluate student performance regularly.
- Encourage self-pacing and self-evaluation by students.

Support Services Interventions

As the program, curriculum, and instruction are student-centered and individualized, so must be student support services.

- Make personalized support services vital in educating the total person--including medical services, health education, social work services, psychological and counseling services, parenting, drug and alcohol abuse services.
- Bring health services to the building, with off-site referrals only for specialized health problems.
- Place a counselor in every elementary school, to handle students academic and social problems, not paper work and clerical tasks.
- Provide crisis intervention counseling as needed, and group and individual counseling daily and weekly.
- Offer peer counseling and peer advocacy.
- Provide child care services and parenting support services.
- Provide parenting, motherhood and fatherhood classes for teenage parents.
- Provide training on parents' rights and responsibilities.
- Develop parent support groups and parenting skills.
- Work with families that need special attention, help and support services.
- Visit regularly with students and their families in their homes.
- Cooperate with alternative service agencies to solve family and other problems.
- Provide necessary special education services that address the social, linguistic, psychological and academic needs of the student.

- Transport students to and from school, work, support services and other out-of-school activities.
- Provide articulation and collaboration to assist students in moving from one level, program or school to another.
- Establish communication between the early childhood teacher and the elementary teacher as the at risk child moves to the elementary level.
- Establish communication between the elementary teacher and the secondary teacher as the at risk student moves to the secondary level.
- Provide summer academic and orientation programs to smooth students' transitions from elementary to middle to high school.

Financial Management Interventions

Financial management will be necessary in the implementation of program interventions to avoid duplication, waste, and unnecessary expenses, on the one hand, while helping to provide adequate funding levels on the other.

- Identify, document, and use creative techniques that cost little money.
- Reallocate existing funds to meet the basic educational needs of all students.
- Use federal, state and local support for different components of the dropout prevention program.
- Support the curriculum with necessary resources, time and money.
- Provide innovative management to find new sources of funds.
- Coordinate financial management in a central school district office, and provide on-site financial management for the program at the school building level.
- Collaborate with local business leaders for assistance in financial planning and management.

Restructuring School's Delivery System

A personalized, student-centered program often requires restructuring of the school's delivery systems to make them appropriate for the preparation of students for the 21st century.

- Question whether the student needs redirecting, or the educational practices/policies needs redirecting.
- Using a team/approach that includes students, examine the instructional system to see what needs to be changed, e.g., financial support, ways of fulfilling Carnegie units, promotion and retention policies, and the grading system.
- First the program; then construct the building.
- Design the physical learning envriornment to fit the ages and needs of the students and the program. Facilitate instruction in multiple locations and sites in the community.
- Break large schools into small schools within schools.
- Provide flexible scheduling and shorten the school day as needed for the students' personalized programs.
- Redesign administrative structures for more effective communication, involvement, and decision-making among students.
- Reach out--make school less intimidating to students, parents and the community.
- Develop an experiential curriculum that provides services to the community, e.g., journalism, health services, horticulture, bakery, print shop, computer repairs--make the school a service center for the community.
- Use the total staff for student development--including custodians, secretaries, cafeteria workers, and bus drivers.
- Provide appropriate scheduling for the involvement of the community in school activities.
- Create a vision of the school as broker of the many services needed by the student, parent and community.

Parent-Teacher-Principal-School Interventions

In operationalizing the above points, the parent, the teacher, the principal, and the school play crucial and significant roles in the prevention of school dropouts. Chart A outlines what collectively this support group can do to positively intervene in the high risk/ dropout prevention process. For each role group, four levels of interventions are suggested: (1) situational expectations/conditional at risk, (2) at risk, (3) high risk, (4) dropout and recovery.

Chart A

PARENT, TEACHER, PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL INTERVENTIONS

POSITIVELY IMPACTING STUDENTS AT RISK, HIGH RISK AND DROPOUTS*

K-6 GRADE LEVELS

STUDENT		PARENT	TEACHER	PRINCIPAL	SCHOOL
SITUATIONAL/ CONDITIONAL AT RISK K-3	INTERVENTION	°Acquires information to prepare student for school. °Reads to student & stimulates a positive environment for learning. °Provides a strong sense of self and a positive self esteem in child. °Becomes involved in home-school support activities.	°Establishes positive classroom environment. °Positive expectations toward students °High motivation to teach. °Strong belief in student success. °Early identification of student concerns/needs. °Provides diagnostic and curriculum match.	° Provides a positive school learning environment. ° Exerts strong academic leadership. ° Communicates effectively with parents. ° Provides support systems to teachers. ° Establishes curriculum accountability.	°School grounds and and classroom are neat, tidy & safe. °School facility within expected utilization °Library resources provide support in academic program °School facilities reflect a positive learning environment.
AT RISK 4-6	INTERVENTION	°Works with student to overcome school, social or personal needs. °Meets with principal and teacher to resolve difficulty that may lead to student underachievement.	°Provides support and challenges students to succeed in classroom. °Meets with underachieving students to give additional help. °Builds self esteem in students through school success. °Counsels students to overcome academic, personal & social concerns.	° Studies ways to combat underachievement & at risk students. ° Meets with teachers to identify and provide programs for underachieving students. ° Works constantly to reduce underachievemnt in school.	° School and community work jointly for supportive programs and school/community partnerships ° School grounds reflect order and safety.

Chart A

PARENT, TEACHER, PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL INTERVENTIONS

POSITIVELY IMPACTING STUDENTS AT RISK, HIGH RISK AND DROPOUTS*

7-12 GRADE LEVELS

STUDENT		PARENT	TEACHER	PRINCIPAL	SCHOOL
HIGH RISK 7-9th	INTERVENTION	°Works with school to assist student to overcome school and social problems. °Works with principal & teachers to address school and social issues affecting student's decision to leave school.	°Individual curriculum provided student to acquire required skills. °Meets with troubled student to give support and assistance. °Works with student to attain short term goals. °Counsels student to overcome academic, personal and social concerns.	° Monitors student achievement. ° Provides interventions to reduce dropout rate. ° Works with teachers to provide programs for high risk students. ° Establishes annual goals in addressing dropout rate in school.	° Community assists school in providing resources to reduce underachievement through broad based involvement. ° School resources reallocated to impact high risk student.
DROP OUT AND RECOVERY 8-12th	INTERVENTION	°Meets with school team to develop and implement a plan of action for the prevention and the recovery of school dropouts. °Monitors students recovery program participation and provides motivation and ongoing support	° Provides students with necessary curriculum ° Counseling support provided to students to cope with school and increase self esteem. ° Meet with parents to provide feedback and support to students.	°Works to assume appropriate support resources for student and staff. °Establishes a Dropout Prevention Task Force (parents,teachers & community leaders) to advise school °Works to facilitate career orientation & skill development recovery programs	°School seen as integral part of the community. °School has necessary resources to combat dropout problem. °School perceived by students as supportive. °School grounds are orderly safe.

*The school dropout problem is extremely complex and offers no easy solutions. The interventions depicted in this chart are meant as <u>one</u> of many <u>collective</u> approaches for the prevention of school dropouts.

Home-School Interventions

The research strongly suggests that there is a relationship between the actual school-parent involvement and student success. Parent involvement as expressed here is much more than the traditional school parent advisory involvement. Dorothy Rich, in her book The Forgotten Factor in School Success: The Family (1985) stresses that parents play an important role in preparing children for school and reinforcing and expanding the work of the school through experiences at home. Effective involvement today needs to be based on a nondeficit view of families. There are strengths in every family that can be mobilized into effective educational action. Schools must begin to include parent involvement as a legitimate, integral part of the program, recognizing that successful teaching of reading and math involves families. Reaching the family must be considered as important as reaching the student. Rich (1985) further suggests four rules for parent involvement programs:

- Link parents' involvement directly to the learning of their own children. An important reward for parents is their children's school success.
- Provide ways for families to reinforce academic skills at home. Easy home learning techniques foster learning: Young children use the TV schedule to keep time limits; older students make the "best buy" purchases at the grocery store and use maps to plan family trips.
- Link the school's work to the community. Schools must share the responsibility of education. Home learning activities can be distributed at workplaces, churches, gas stations and grocery stores.
- Provide for parent involvement at all levels of schooling. Research and parent programs have primarily centered on early childhood, but continuing support is needed as children move through school. Teens need help from home to get the best of secondary schools.

A checklist to assist in this family-school interaction is provided in Appendix E. This checklist consists of a 20-question assessment tool on school district policy and family-school initiatives.

SECTION VIII. SUMMARY

The problem of school dropouts will continue to expand and increase in intensity, producing educational, social, psychological and financial harm both to students and society; unless schools, in cooperation with parents, community and business-labor-industrial sectors, make a firm and decisive commitment to address and resolve the root causes of the problem. The problem stems from multidimensional factors which are difficult to resolve with simplistic approaches and strategies. This is not to discourage any effort that seeks to address the complex problem of school dropouts. Rather, we strongly encourage, support and urge school leaders to carefully examine the contents of this framework and integrate those elements that are most appropriate into their unique schools or districts. Through an empowering collaborative approach, we can begin to make an impact on the prevention of school dropouts.

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education provides seven principles for a dropout prevention blueprint for success (NFIE, pp. 7-26, 1986):

1. BELIEVING THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE

   A clearly articulated vision is the beginning for an effective dropout prevention program.

   Committed, creative leadership is needed that enables the belief in the impossible, the taking of risks, the chancing of failure, the unrelenting persistence to begin again and keep trying with different approaches until we succeed.

   Society's institutions, including education, must expand their capabilities of empowering all students to lead productive and fulfilling lives. As a human invention brought about by change, the educational institution must continue to change to fulfill its mission to the changing society.

2. RESTORING A HUMAN CENTERED BASE

The human connection is all important as a prerequisite for success in meeting the needs of those students who are at risk of dropping out of school. Educational success involves people meeting people, personal caring, trusting, patience, a supportive school climate. Human-centered education requires the interaction of people understanding and supporting each other.

In successful programs, educators and persons providing supportive services demonstrate an understanding of the individual student's culture and know the individual student in a one-on-one relationship. This demands an awareness and understanding of a student's background, family, economic condition, social situation, cultural identification, and other significant factors factors relating to the person's individual identity.

3. INTERACTIVE INTERSECTIONS

Collaboration is required to provide total and comprehensive services to the total person. Neither the educators nor the community nor the family can do what is necessary alone. We all need to work together for the individual student's achievement and growth.

The complexity of the at risk problem requires a comprehensive team effort--parents, teachers, counselors, principals, school board members, school superintendent, education support personnel, business and industry leaders, social workers, staff and volunteers of community service organizations, cultural council representatives, local foundation executives, local government officials, child protection teams, nurses, doctors and other medical personnel, lawyers, law enforcement officials, corrections officers, judges, psychologists, leaders of special programs, representatives of public and private agencies, and others.

4. THE ONLY AXIS

Student-centered education involves the uninvolved, reduces the risk of students' dropping out, and enables them to become productive in society. Our challenge is to move from a faceless, collective education to a primary focus on educating the individual student. The student, not the system, must become the center of our attention.

Early intervention is necessary. The sooner we can intervene with at risk students, the better our chances of success. Invest in early childhood education--preschool or kindergarten; replicate successful early childhood programs. Begin at least in elementary school--high school is too late for too many. Build the relationship between work and education with elementary students.

5. LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY

The classroom level is the essential focal point for effective dropout prevention programs, with local building management and total participation. Top-down programs and programs managed and delivered beyond a local school focus are diffuse, lack the human connections, and lack the personalized approach to motivate and meet the needs of at risk students.

Decision making closest to the action--at the grass roots, is at the school building level. Collaborative decision making at the school building level is essential from design to delivery to accountability.

Make decisions using data gathered locally; use local business and government planning data.

Make decisions slowly and carefully--if it is worth doing, it will take time.

Flatten the hierarchy--avoid top-down administrative overlay. provide participatory decision making.

Allow professionals to make decisions and to lead.

Secure district and state support for local decision making by persons working with students.

6. EMPOWERING ALL TO HELP

Empowering must be a whole school and a community phenomenon. It involves all working with students at risk--teachers principals, counselors, community participants, business leaders, volunteers, parents, providers, and other collaborators.

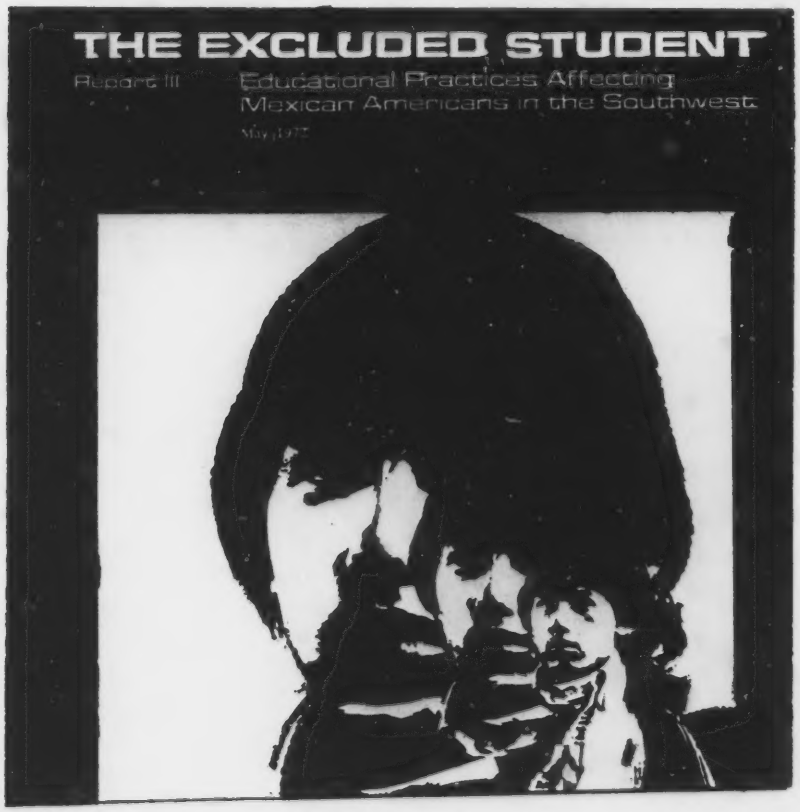
From the design of the program to meeting the needs of students, collaborators must also develop new skills. Thus, training is a necessity for all collaborators, not just educators.

7. MINE AND OURS

Empowerment of collaborators and students will result from their sense of ownership of their dropout prevention program. This ownership is created when values and skills are matched with needs and services. It empowers everyone to achieve the desired goal with students--enabling individuals to have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to meet the challenges they will face in the future.

Those who believe in the program and feel empowered through training and involvement in decision making and delivery of services will have a strong sense of ownership and pride.

No one wishes failure to our students, who are the hope and the pride of our tomorrow. By understanding the causes of student failure, the school environment and climate that contribute to that failure, we can change those institutional practices and barriers that promote failure in our schools. School decision makers can make the difference between failure and success for our students. It is our sincere desire that this publication has provided some guidance toward that direction: the prevention of school failure and empowering the students to succeed. Early interventions and educational expectations that promote access, quality education, and the right to career options are imperative for a democratic and productive society.



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SECTION X: APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT ON
STUDENT DROPOUTS AND PREVENTION/RECOVERY

MISSION STATEMENT

The District is a public education institution concerned with providing equal education opportunities to all students in order to prepare, train and equip students to be responsible citizens, and to successfully enable them to participate in the world of work of our economy.

The school district is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students and recognizes the significant number of students who dropout of school and who are potential dropouts given their present low educational attainment. Furthermore, for every one hundred students entering seventh grade, approximately one-third will drop out of school before completing the twelfth grade. Of the remaining two-thirds, half achieve below grade level.

In recognizing these existing conditions the District finds it essential to improve the quality of its educational programs and provide the necessary interventions to prevent students from becoming at risk and dropouts.

ACTION STEPS

1. Undertake a comprehensive process that will yield an Action Plan that is short and long term in scope to address the school dropout problem, and propose corrective action.

2. Involve parents, students, school personnel, business and service organizations, through a district task force and school site councils, in the development and implementation of an Action Plan to address the prevention and recovery of student dropouts.

3. Develop action programs that will increase school holding power for potential dropouts, decrease discipline problems and cause dropout students to return to school.

4. Develop action programs and approaches in grades Kinder to 12th that will raise the expectations of school personnel, students and parents regarding student school achievement and opportunities for careers, job access, and higher education.

5. Develop the mechanism for elementary and secondary school districts to network and articulate their programs in the prevention of at-risk students.

6. Develop a research agenda that will identify educational conditions that contribute or prevent students from becoming at-risk and dropouts.

7. Develop a support system involving the business and industrial community in developing and implementing strategies for work study programs targeted on the prevention and recovery of dropout students.

8. Actualize school board expectations that call for school staff commitment to prevent student dropouts, while recognizing the need for program flexibility in dealing with the multifaceted problem of school dropouts.

9. Allocate the necessary resources that are short and long term driven in the prevention of at risk and dropout students.

APPENDIX B

DEFINITION OF A SCHOOL DROPOUT

Introduction

The clear definition of who is a school dropout is extremely important, because it sets the perimeters and conditions by which school districts gauge the percentage number of dropouts. To avoid ambiguity and lack of consistency, districts must have a clear understanding of the elements contained in the definition due to its implications on the following:

1). Percentages of dropouts
2). Accurate and consistent dropout information
3). Data collection
4). Programmatic considerations for prevention/recovery programs

The following are samples of definitions of school dropouts, listed from the most comprehensive or inclusive to the least inclusive. (Source: An Essay on School Dropout for the San Diego Unified School District by Robert B. Barr, 1985)

A school dropout is:

° a student who leaves the system (a school or a district), for whatever reason and destination, after a minimum matriculation period.

° a student who leaves the system and does not transfer to another regular public or private school system.

° a student who leaves the system, does not transfer to another system, and is not enrolled in an alternative educational program such as the GED, adult education, armed services, or the penal system.

° a student who leaves, does not transfer, does not participate is an alternative educational program, and who is physically able to participate.

° a student who leaves, does not transfer, does not participate in an alternative educational program, is physically and mentally able to attend and participate.

Other definitions used by selected school districts include:

° A dropout is any person who leaves school prior to graduation from high school and who does not enter, within 45 calendar days, another public or private school or program which leads to a high school diploma or its equivalent." (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985.)

° Dropouts [are] students who left AISD and for whom we could find no evidence that they entered another school or district where they could receive a school diploma." (Austin Independent School District, 1985.)

"A dropout is a student who leaves high school before graduation." (Dropping Out, Losing out: The High Cost for California." The Assembly Office of Research, 1985)

Legislative definitions include:

"Youth between the ages of 13 to 19 who have left school prior to graduation and who do not request within 45 school days to have their academic records forwarded to another school." (S.B. 65, 1985)

"A dropout means a person who stops attending school prior to receiving a high school diploma or the legal equivalent thereof, and who does not enroll in another public or private educational institution or school program within 45 school days of ceasing attendance." (AB 3287, pending)

Factors to consider in the DEFINITION OF SCHOOL DROPOUT:

1. WHO: Student in what grade levels: K-7, 8-12, 9-12 or 10-12?

2. WHAT: Ceases attendance in what schools?

   Public: elementary, junior high or high school levels?
   Private: elementary, junior high or high school levels?

   Fails to demonstrate intention of returning, such as:

   Does not return or enroll in another public or private institution with a program that leads to a high school diploma or its equivalent.

   Does not request academic records to be forwarded to another school.

   Within a certain determined period, for example: (1) 45 calendar days; (2) 60 days; (3) 3 months; (4) other

3. WHEN: Before completing high school diploma requirements.

4. WHY: Documentation of validated reasons for dropping out of school.

5. ACCOUNTING:

   Does the district or school policy have a restrictive definition or a comprehensive definition. The former would exclude a number of students. The latter would attempt to include as many students as possible.

APPENDIX C

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Research Department

DROPOUT PREVENTION ROUND TABLE RECOMMENDATIONS
June 2, 1986

Issue

The superintendent's cabinet in December authorized the Dropout Prevention Round Table and directed a temporary project committee to do the preliminary planning for this Round Table. The Dropout Prevention Round Table and its task forces met several times between March 18 and May 14 to develop action plans for a comprehensive dropout prevention and recovery program and its coordination and monitoring. The Round Table has completed its work and its recommendations for this program are now being provided to the superintendent's cabinet as an information item.

Background

The superintendent's cabinet in December authorized the Dropout Prevention Round Table. On March 12, the Round Table was convened to receive its charge of preparing a long-term comprehensive program of dropout prevention and recovery and to develop a plan to coordinate, support, monitor, and evaluate dropout prevention and recovery efforts. Six task forces were organized to accomplish the work of the Round Table and to formulate recommended action steps that respond to this charge.

Round Table membership included representatives from the business community, local governmental agencies, universities, community members-at-large, the advisory committees to the superintendent, students, PTA, and school staff. Members of the Round Table participated in task forces which had additional members from the community and school staff. Each task force was assigned a resource person from the central administrative office staff. (See Attachment 1 for list of all participants).

Task forces met three times to prepare suggested action steps which were presented to the Round Table for comment. There was an additional meeting for most of the task forces to revise their action-step reports to the Round Table. The Round Table deliberated on the task force reports in two subsequent meetings.

The action plan responds to five objectives which are derived from the policy adopted by the Board of Education, superintendent's charge, and district goals. They are as follows:

District Policy for Dropout Prevention and Recovery

The San Diego Unified School District has the responsibility to establish, implement, improve, and coordinate the delivery of program and student support services and systems, kindergarten through grade 12, for both potential and actual student dropouts, to reduce the percentage of dropouts and increase the rate of recovery of those who have left school.

The district recognizes the importance of pre-kindergarten programs in promoting dropout prevention. Existing school district pre-school programs will be included in dropout prevention efforts. In addition, community pre-school providers will be encouraged to become involved in these same efforts.

Dropout Prevention and Recovery Goals

Achieve by the end of the 1988-89 school year:

1. a 50 percent reduction in the district's student dropout rate for grades 9-12 from the 1985-86 base-year rate;

2. a 75 percent reduction in the rate for identification of potential dropouts in grades K-8 from the 1985-86 base-year rate; and

3. a 25 percent recovery rate for students who drop out.

Dropout Round Table Goal and Objectives

Goal: The Dropout Prevention Round Table is to recommend a comprehensive action plan for the development and coordination of dropout prevention and recovery programs and student academic support services to accomplish the district's goals.

Obj. 1 Recommend a plan to establish strong linkages and commitments between school and community in support of student learning, dropout prevention and recovery. Community includes parents, student organizations, business, government, community groups (including grass roots groups), religious institutions, and parent organizations.

Obj. 2 Prepare an action plan for a long-term comprehensive program (Pre-K through 12) of dropout prevention and recovery. This plan should address to the extent practicable the following:

a. Development of definitions of "potential dropout," "dropout," and "recovered student" for use throughout the planning and implementation phases of a comprehensive dropout prevention and recovery program.

b. Improvement of quality, flexibility, and diversity of educational service delivery and student academic support systems to better meet the needs of potential dropouts and to facilitate more success in school.

c. Development of early identification procedures and interventions to aid potential dropouts.

d. Improvement of the success of dropout recovery efforts by enhancing the flexibility and diversity of learning systems, educational options, and educational service delivery to recovered students.

e. Provision of equal access to the highest degree of quality education for all students.

f. Review by district staff of all existing district educational policies and initiation of changes as warranted to ensure their compatibility with dropout prevention and recovery policy.

Obj. 3 Develop an action plan to coordinate, support, monitor, and evaluate efforts in dropout prevention and recovery. This plan should provide for:

a. Establishment of strong coordination of all student support services and programs for potential and actual dropouts.

b. Establishment of responsibilities and accountability for dropout prevention and recovery at both the district and school levels.

c. Establishment of processes for monitoring and evaluating dropout prevention and recovery programs and student support services.

d. Preparation of a research and evaluation agenda to secure and organize baseline information about student dropout and current educational conditions of the district as a basis for developing programs and student support services for dropout prevention and recovery. This agenda also should aim at providing meaningful insights and practical applications for the development of programs and policy recommendations for the improvement of dropout prevention and recovery.

Obj. 4 Develop a plan to have allocation of current resources reviewed by district staff to provide an appropriate distribution of resources that address school site needs, such as, site teacher experience, counseling services, instructional dollars, base monies, library utilization, playground space, and other support resources.

Obj.5 Develop a plan to have the district institutionalize those policies, practices, and resource allocations that are determined to be successful in dropout prevention and recovery.

Discussion

There are three underlying issues related to the dropout prevention and recovery actions. They are academic achievement and the performance of schools; disproportionate representation of Blacks, Hispanics and native Americans among dropouts; and financial losses to individuals, society, and the school district. Many of the Round Table recommended action steps are related to improving academic achievement for potential student dropouts through improved academic support services.

The issue of disproportionate representation of some minority group students among dropouts is addressed in the action steps. Minority students who do drop out are also disproportionately represented in the economically disadvantaged group. But that group also includes majority students who drop out of school. Therefore, recommended action steps address the low socio-economic group rather than minority group students. Other actions address the underserved and low-achieving students who historically have been disproportionately minority students.

The issue of financial loss to individuals, society and the school district is not directly addressed in the Round Table's recommendations. Individuals who drop out of school diminish their economic life chances. Several recommendations address the relationship of schooling to the world of work. The cost to society for student dropouts is known to be great but hard to estimate in dollars. Students who drop out are more likely to require public health services, become welfare recipients, or be involved with the justice system. Because their wage earning is diminished, they pay less in income, sales, and social security taxes, thereby providing less economic support to finance societal requirements than those who complete high school. The entire set of recommended actions are for the economic benefit of society as well as the educational and economic benefit to potential dropouts and dropouts.

The financial loss to the district should be kept in mind. More than 1,600 students dropped out of San Diego City Schools during the 1982-83 school year and it's likely that at least this number have dropped out each year since then. This means that an average of about 45 students drop out of school each week. With a "revenue limit" allowance of approximately $2,400, the prorated loss to the district is likely to be one to two million dollars annually. This loss is compounded by the fact that many of the resources to educate these dropouts are in place to some degree. Reducing the number of dropouts by 25 percent could mean substantial added revenue to the district each year.

<u>The most significant set of recommendations that will improve the effectiveness of existing and future dropout prevention programs and services are those actions to coordinate and monitor these programs and services</u>. Round Table members strongly believe that a system of coordination and monitoring is of the highest priority and should be the first consideration. They believe that an administrative coordinator should be at the assistant superintendent level and be a voting member of the superintendent's cabinet. Round Table members were cautious to add that this need not be a new position but could become an additional responsibility of one of the existing assistant superintendents.

DROPOUT PREVENTION ROUND TABLE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Dropout Prevention Round Table is recommending action steps for the development of a comprehensive dropout prevention and recovery program. The action steps are presented in three sets. These are:

- o actions the Central Administration of the district should take;
- o actions Schools should take; and
- o actions that can strengthen the Parent and Community involvement in the district's dropout prevention program.

The full presentation of recommendations follows.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS

The dropout prevention program recommendations of the Dropout Prevention Round Table ask the district's Central Administration to consider taking action in several areas. These areas include the:

- o adoption of certain principles as philosophical underpinnings of the dropout out prevention program.
- o review of certain policies that relate to dropout prevention and recovery.
- o establishment of district level coordination and monitoring of dropout prevention.
- o identification of students who are at risk of dropping out and intervention strategies to assist such students.
- o development of certain student support services.
- o recognition of the need for staff development, teacher involvement and incentives.
- o requirement of data collection, evaluation and research.

Principles of the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program

The San Diego Unified School District should adopt the following ten principles as the philosophy of the district's dropout prevention and recovery program.

1. All students have the capacity to learn, achieve, and succeed.
2. All students have a right to a learning environment that helps them to actualize their optimal potential.
3. All students have a right to competent teachers and administrators.

4. All students have the right to high academic expectations and to achieve at grade level or better.

5. All students need basic knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary for developing cognitively, affectively, and physically.

6. All students need to go through developmental stages that shape their intellectual, emotional, and social skills.

7. All students have the right to contextually relevant educational experiences that are conceptually based.

8. All students have the right to a school structure, learning climate, academic environment, and resources that are equal in quality within and across districts.

9. All students have the right to multilingual-multicultural education.

10. All students have a right to culturally pluralistic education and to develop skills to function in a pluralistic society.

These principles recognize that students are important and should be made to feel important.

Review of District Policies

District policies should be reviewed with the following general recommendations in mind:

- Establish reduction of student dropout and improvement of the recovery and retention of dropouts as goals of all district management team members.

- Examine, analyze, modify and monitor the use of all available resources to assure their equitable distribution. Such resources include credentialed personnel, instructional funds, revenue limit and categorical program monies, and counselors.

- Plan and modify school facilities that contribute to quality and equity of learning environments.

- Limit school enrollments to a optimum size that allows effective teaching.

- Allow schools more flexibility and resources to develop alternative education programs which lead to a high school diploma to accommodate the special needs of potential dropouts and recovered students.

- o Revise policies and practices to assure that they promote quality education and maintain academic expectations commensurate with equitable achievement outcomes for all students.

- o Review, modify, and monitor policies and practices that foster and support students belongingness and socio-cultural identity (e.g., provide opportunities for all students to participate in decision-making, school activities, and programs).

- o Review, analyze, modify, and monitor policies and practices which promote students' positive self concept and provide necessary counseling and academic support to succeed in school.

- o Establish standards for San Diego County teacher training institutions that require incorporating knowledge of successful intervention practices impacting at risk students in their training programs.

In addition, the district is asked to take actions regarding specific policies. These are:

- o Review the Promotion/Retention policy to determine whether or not it compounds the problems of overage-for-grade students and develop appropriate interventions.

- o Reduce class size at grades K-3 in schools whose CAP comparison bands are below the state average to ensure intensive attention and instruction with regard to academic and developmental skills.

- o Reestablish a high school program of vocational education in combination with related academic skills (e.g., similar to the discontinued Wright Brothers/Regional Occupational Center Program).

- o Permit acceleration of credits for students who are overage-for-grade or seriously credit deficient.

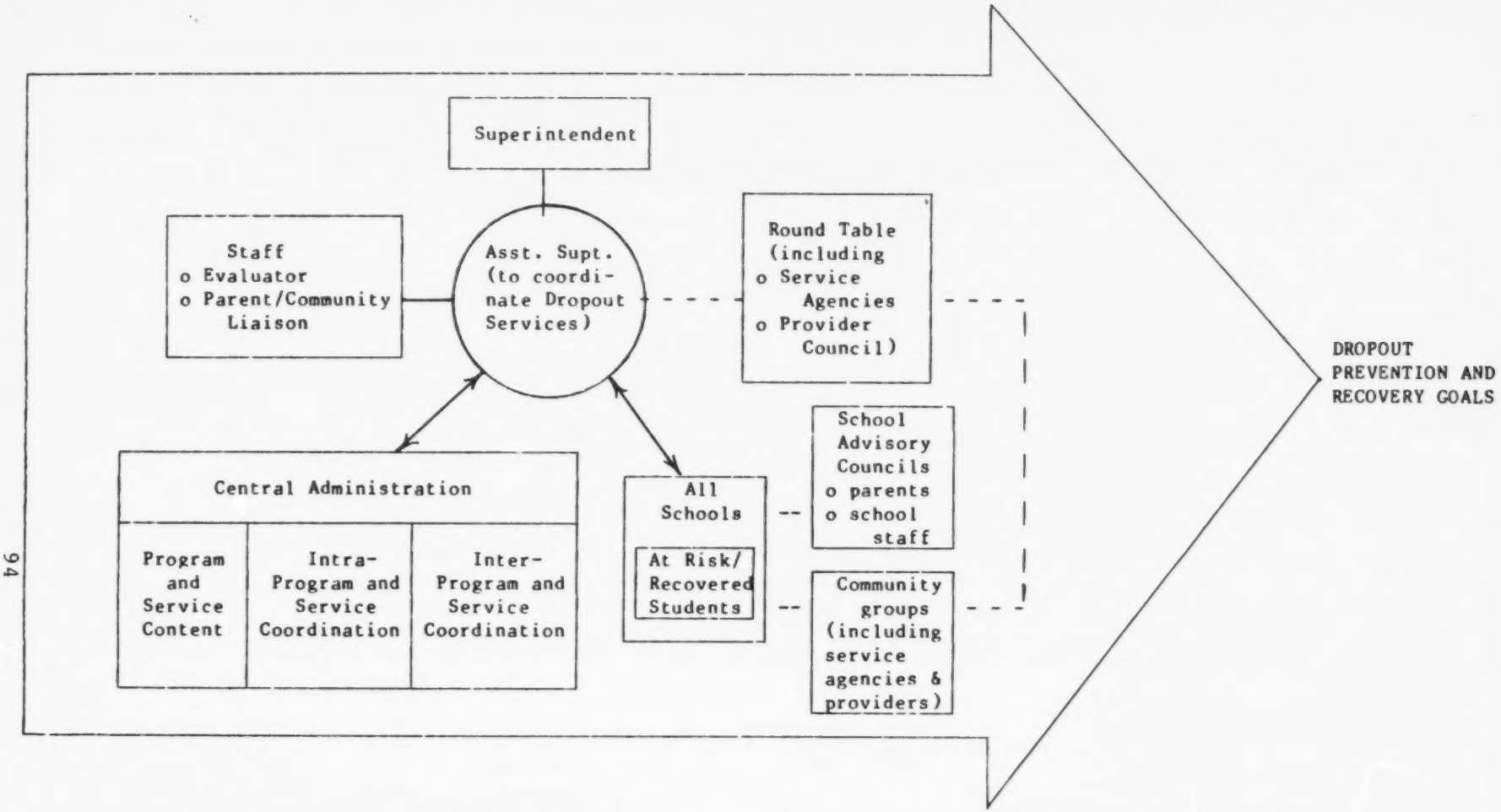
- o Permit attendance less than full time. (e.g., examine possibility of contract independent study coordinated with other district programs.)

Coordination and Monitoring

The Dropout Prevention Round Table recommends the district appoint an Administrator for Dropout and Recovery Services. This individual should be at the assistant superintendent level (a voting member of the superintendent's cabinet) and will direct and coordinate the district's dropout prevention and recovery program. (See attached Model of Coordination and Monitoring Structure on page 8.) The responsibilities for this position would include:

- o identifying, reviewing and evaluating the district's present dropout prevention and recovery support systems for effectiveness and current levels of support. This should include a review of existing policies and procedures dealing with dropouts. A team, which should include an independent evaluator, should perform this overall review.

MODEL OF COORDINATION AND MONITORING STRUCTURE
FOR DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY PROGRAM



Structure for Coordination and Monitoring to attain District's Dropout Prevention and Recovery Goals. Features are:

- o Systematic and comprehensive delivery of dropout prevention and recovery services and programs.
- o Community and service provider involvement
- o Change initiating
- o Accountability (monitoring and evaluation)

- reviewing and revising, as appropriate, the performance objectives for each district program serving potential dropouts or dropouts.

- developing a computerized inventory of dropout prevention and recovery programs within schools. This inventory should include entrance requirements and their current open/closed status.

- developing an accountability system that monitors programs and services and involves measurement of short- and long-term achievement outcomes and improvement in school attendance.

- addressing the dropout problems at both the elementary and secondary schools, emphasizing early identification, counseling and prevention at the elementary level.

- developing clear communication channels regarding dropout prevention throughout the district, including direct contact with school sites to encourage dropout recovery and prevention services.

- developing a public relations and information flow to constituent groups in the district and community.

- soliciting information and important data from the schools.

- developing, maintaining, and coordinating an inventory of support systems outside the school district, including those of community agencies and other school districts.

- reviewing proposed policies, procedures and programs for impact on drop-outs (e.g., the recent adoptions of increased graduation requirements and course proficiencies may increase the number of dropouts).

- scheduling regular, action-oriented meetings with all management staff assigned dropout program responsibilities. Minutes from these meetings should be broadly disseminated.

- developing a system to identify for evaluation and research pur poses: dropouts, exempt students, students in dropout programs, and potential dropouts.

- establishing a uniform and consistently applied system of immediate identification and case management of students who drop out. Such a system should require:

    1. schools to complete a data fact sheet on each dropout as soon as the student leaves the regular school program (it is not to be delayed the period required for official classification as a dropout). This fact sheet can be used to institute a recovery program tailored to the unique needs of the dropout.

2. student articulation between grade levels be given special attention.

3. information to be compiled monthly on dropouts and reported to the Administrator for Dropout and Recovery Services.

4. personal contacts following up on identified dropouts.

5. centralized intake of dropouts who are recovered.

6. case management to ensure that dropouts are not "lost" and recovery efforts are not prematurely terminated.

- reporting quarterly to the Board of Education the participation of dropouts, exempt students and recovered students in the various dropout programs.

- establishing a district-level team of dropout specialists to work in a two- or three-year pilot program giving priority attention to the schools experiencing the highest number of dropouts. The team's responsibilities should include:

1. serving as a clearinghouse for information about recovery programs for use by parents, dropouts, and school staff.

2. establishing a well publicized hot line that dropouts can call to learn about their opportunities to re-enter educational programs.

3. following up monthly dropout reports with personal contacts with identified dropouts.

4. establishing a link between community resources and the school system so that full use is made of those resources in recovery programs (e.g., tutorial, counseling, health services, and employment opportunities.)

5. conducting seminars to prepare potential dropouts and their parents for dropping out of school.

6. assigning of a dropout specialist to the district's Educational Clinic program.

Identification of Students at Risk of Dropping Out and Interventions

Recommended actions regarding identification are to:

- establish early identification of at-risk students as part of a comprehensive and diagnostic process which begins in preschool and continues through high school graduation.

- o establish a system of data collection for a student profile that immediately identifies students requiring specific interventions. (Student data includes: diagnostic profile of achievement, school attendance, language proficiency, grade retentions, behavior management difficulties, and other indicators. This profile should be divided into developmental stages of preschool through grade 3, grade 4 through grade 6, grade 7 through grade 9, and grades 10 through 12.)

The Round Table's action steps regarding intervention strategies are to:

- o begin actions that respond to the special needs of high-risk/dropout students with preschool programs. A first step is to expand early childhood education programs to provide preschoolers from low socio-economic and/or "at-risk" situations with access to necessary school experiences and developmental activities. At a minimum, the Early Admissions Kindergarten classes should be expanded to all low socio-economic areas.

- o develop and monitor policies and practices which promote and provide students with programs and support services (skill development, career guidance, and health orientation) which will assist them in becoming self-actualized and have a broad range of career options.

- o develop approaches for addressing the complex problem of high-risk/ dropout student that include:

    1. developing a policy orientation which values school success for all students.

    2. identifing student needs.

    3. matching interventions with student needs.

    4. implementing an accountability system that monitors the effectiveness of program interventions.

    5. using quality indicators that monitor student outcomes in grades K-12.

- o Improve district efforts to address the special educational needs of recovered students who are:

    1. limited English proficient.

    2. learning handicapped.

    3. seriously credit deficient and overage-for-grade students who are unable or ineligible to attend existing alternative programs due to transportation problems, reading level restrictions of programs or because their attendance might disrupt the district's ethnic balance for an alternative program.

4. students excluded from most of the district's primary alternative programs because they are 13-15 years old.

- o develop intervention strategies to eliminate achievement/ability grouping when it denies students upward mobility.

Student Support Services

Actions regarding academic, counseling and other support services are as follows:

Academic Support Services

- o Establish student support systems which provide high academic and behavior standards for potential at-risk students. These systems should encourage homework requirements, conceptual development and achievement gains in all schools.

- o Establish continuation or opportunity school programs at selectively chosen school sites with large numbers of high-risk students so that students may re-enter a school program at any time during the school year.

- o Expand the existing pregnant minor program so that more students are served.

- o Establish evening summer school.

- o Expand contract independent study programs.

Counseling Support Services

- o Provide additional student counseling at all schools, especially elementary schools. Elementary school counseling centers should be expanded to provide early interventions addressing home/school/non-school related problems of students at risk of dropping out.

Other Support Services

- o Expand child care programs for teenage parents.

- o Provide free transportation to alternative programs.

Staff Development, Involvement and Incentives

The Round Table recommends that the district:

- o plan activities to inservice school staffs regarding research on school dropouts and provide teachers who serve at-risk students with ways of positively addressing socio-cultural and socio-economic differences, linguistic diversity and student under-achievement.

- o survey classroom teachers to determine what support systems will aid them in better meeting the special needs of potential dropouts.

- o encourage and actively solicit from site personnel new and creative ideas for alternative education.

- o provide opportunities for early involvement and reaction of site staff to specific proposals and plans for dropout prevention and recovery programs.

- o provide additional resource support and financial incentives (through district and other sources) to school staff to demonstrate effective programs that reduce dropout rates and recover dropouts.

- o provide incentives that will attract committed and enthusiastic staff to schools with significant numbers of high-risk students. These staff members should be trained to positively address socio-cultural and socio-economic differences, linguistic diversity, and student underachievement.

Data Collection, Evaluation and Research

The Round Table recommends definitions of dropout, potential dropout and recovered students for use in the research on dropouts and evaluation of the prevention and recovery program. In addition, recommendations are made regarding data collection processes and an evaluation and research agenda.

Definitions

- o Dropout. Any student who has been enrolled in grades 7 through 12, but who left prior to graduation or completion of a formal education or legal equivalent and who did not within 45 school days enter another public or private educational institution or school program, as documented by a written request for a transcript.

  This definition is adapted from the California State Department of Education definition of dropout. The recommended definition differs from the State Department of Education's definition in that it includes grades 7-12, whereas the department's definition only covers grades 10-12. The department's definition will be used next fall when the number of dropouts is reported through the California Basic Educational Data Systems (CBEDS) survey.

- o Potential Dropout. Any student identified as at-risk of retention using the criteria of the district's promotion/retention program.

- o Recovered Student. Any dropout who has returned to a regular high school or a dropout recovery program.

Data Collection

- o Develop a coordinated computerized data system to follow individual students and to encompass data required for research and evaluation of dropout prevention and recovery programs.

Evaluation and Research Agenda

- o The following topics are recommended for such an agenda; they are ranked from highest to lowest priority.

  1. Examine activities that successfully involve parents in the schools and the education of their children.

  2. Identify practices of teachers who are successful with students who are at risk of dropping out.

  3. Study the effects of student mobility on students' reading achievement.

  4. Devise a methodology to determine teachers expectations of and preconceptions about students.

The following items were not included in the ranking but should be considered with the others.

- o Examine, plan and modify physical facilities of schools to attain equity of learning environments. Attention should be given to: space (e.g., library, resource rooms, playground, restrooms, landscaping), beauty, cleanliness, and maintenance.

- o Study the effects being overage-for-grade on students learning, achievement, and self-esteem.

SCHOOLS ACTIONS

The Round Table's recommendations to schools focus on Educational Orientation, Support Systems/Interventions, Program Flexibility, Staff Development/Involvement, and Parent/Student Involvement.

Educational Orientation

- o Develop an orientation that values school success for all students.

- Provide a school experience that matches students needs with a curriculum designed to sequentially develop academic/intellectual skills at each grade level and appropriate assessment to determine academic outcomes.

Support Systems/Interventions

- Establish student social and academic support systems which will encourage high academic and behavior standards for potential at-risk students. Such a system would require homework, conceptual development gains, and achievement gains.

- Establish a system of data collection for a student profile that immediately identifies students requiring specific interventions. (Student data includes: diagnostic profile of achievement, school attendance, language proficiency, grade retentions, behavior management difficulties, and other indicators. This profile should be divided into developmental stages of preschool through grade 3, grade 4 through grade 6, grade 7 through grade 9, and grade 10 through 12.)

- Ensure that interventions correspond to the profile of student needs as determined by diagnostic data and other indicators.

- Develop intervention strategies to eliminate achievement/ability grouping when it denies students upward mobility.

- Provide additional student counseling at all schools, especially elementary schools. Elementary school counseling centers should be expanded to provide early interventions addressing home/school/non-school related problems of students at risk of dropping out.

- Expand tutorial programs to give at-risk students increased personal attention (e.g. programs designed on the AVID model).

Program Flexibility

- Combine career education, job training and job placement in students' educational programs.

- Permit acceleration of credits for students who are overage-for-grade or seriously credit deficient.

- Permit attendance less than full time (e.g., examine the possibility of contract independent study coordinated with other district programs.)

- Expand child care programs for teenage parents.

- Expand contract independent study programs.

Staff Development/Involvement

- Plan activities to inservice school staffs regarding research on school dropouts and provide teachers who serve at-risk students with ways of positively addressing socio-cultural and socio-economic differences, linguistic diversity and student underachievement.

- Survey classroom teachers to determine what support systems will aid them in better meeting the special needs of students at risk of dropping out.

- Encourage and actively solicit from teachers new and creative ideas for alternative education.

- Provide opportunities for early involvement and for reaction of teachers to specific proposals and plans for dropout prevention and recovery programs.

Parent/Student Involvement

- Involve parents, students, and school personnel in developing and implementing programs that yield effective, efficient and relevant school curriculum to address the needs of potential high-risk students.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIONS

The Dropout Prevention Round Table has made recommendations that the district create and strengthen parent/school/teacher communications and involve parents in dropout prevention. In addition, actions to strengthen community (i.e. large and small businesses, community-based agencies, community service groups, other governmental agencies, and church and religious groups) involvement are recommended.

Parent Involvement

- Implement a districtwide program for parent/school education at each school to:

    1. dispel myths about parents and schools.

    2. create understanding of school/parent frustrations.

    3. bridge school and parent expectations.

    4. create understanding and respect of parental rights.

5. use parent and community expertise and resources in the educational process.

6. create understanding and appreciation of the community and home environment and integrate relevant aspects of community and family values into the school curriculum.

6. extend the school into the community as the basis for understanding that education does not take place only within the confines of a school.

- Enhance parent/school/teacher communications by developing districtwide mechanisms for dropout prevention which:

1. establish landmark student placement milestones during a student's scholastic life that mandate the involvement of parents and teachers in the placement of students.

2. provide quarterly reports to parents that outline the grade level concepts that have been mastered, concepts lacking mastery, and the academic support available for all grades K through 8.

3. establish as part of the process for early identification of potential dropouts the involvement of parents at the beginning of a problem, not at the end.

4. have schools create a welcoming environment for parents and community that effectively communicates the desire of the schools to be a part of the community and to use community resources that are available.

5. establish regular means of communicating with parent/school/community about student educational needs. These may be a school newsletter that is distributed very widely in the community and educational meetings held in other-than-school facilities, preferably homes. Perhaps the San Diego County Department's Educational Television (ETV) system can offer a broad opportunity for such communications.

6. establish motivational and guidance services to parents that provide a home/school student support system to reduce the risk of students dropping out.

- Establish a districtwide program for parents of potential and actual dropouts using parents as advocates for parents and using as a model, the Special Education Parent Facilitators Program.

Community Involvement

- Continue the Dropout Prevention Round Table as an advisory council to the Administrator for Dropout Prevention and Recovery Services. This council should:

    1. design and recommend action steps to modify and increase parent and community involvement in dropout prevention.

    2. survey successful programs on community/school involvement and dropout prevention in this district and other districts to develop recommendations for potential implementation and modification at district schools.

    3. survey students, former students and parents about educational needs, causes and rationales for dropping out of school, frustrations with schools and environment that lead to school dissatisfaction.

    4. survey community and corporate leadership, community and corporate organizations and agencies, and parents to determine what is expected of schools, what schools should look like programmatically and physically and the role of the community in education.

    5. establish an advisory group consisting of community agency representatives skilled in working with"high risk" youth. This advisory group should be charged with actively exploring how the school system and these community agencies can improve communication and working relationships on behalf of high-risk students and their families.

    6. form a small "World of Work" advisory committee consisting of representatives from corporations who have a special interest in the training and adequacy of the future work force in San Diego County. This advisory group should advise on curriculum development and development of work opportunity programs. This group will probably require the services of at least a half-time district staff member to be effective.

- Establish an ombudsman office to act on behalf of parents, community and schools to:

    1. promote the proper use of parents, community, and schools in the education of students.

    2. establish a parent/community resource and information center providing assistance, resources, and information to parents and community about how to help students, and cope with dropping out of school and to demystify the school district for parents and the community.

- Establish a working relationship with the Private Industry Council and private industry to provide job training and placement opportunities as incentives for students to complete their education.

- Promote and coordinate expansion of the "Adopt-A-School" program to fully use small neighborhood businesses and groups such as, Community Alert, garden clubs, community-based agencies and senior citizens.

- Develop the active cross-utilization of school and community resources, including facilities, expertise, and services.

- Direct both in-school and outside-of-school support systems toward student achievement outcomes and school holding power. Before and after school academic help services involving the business/labor community, the service community, and the parent/student community should be included.

- Establish a network with churches and other religious organizations. This network should:

    1. Expand the concept of "Education Sunday" throughout the school district.

    2. Promote understanding of the educational function of churches and other religious organizations and of the potential conflict between school programs and individual religious beliefs.

- sult with co tions and public relations experts to develop aggressive com tion program encouraging dropouts to return to school and discourage students from dropping out of school. Such a program should:

    1. use public service spots on radio and television to encourage dropouts to call a dropout recovery hot line.

    2. circulate a publication on the economic and social risks of dropping out of school. This should include personal testimonies of successful local persons and representatives of those communities with high dropout rates attesting to the advantages of remaining in school.

    3. sponsor annual "Return to School" fairs at shopping malls that feature opportunities for returning to school and continuing educational opportunities such as R.O.P.

    4. promote a communitywide initiative on staying in school (DROP IN, NOT OUT) spearheaded by San Diego leadership, especially public and corporate leadership. It should be modeled after "SAY NO TO DRUGS." This initiative should include district leadership but not necessarily be spearheaded by that leadership.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the superintendent direct appropriate staff to develop implementation plans from the Dropout Prevention Round Table's recommendations.

Budget/School Site Implications

No budget or school-site impacts can be identified until specific recommendations are selected for implementation.

Report prepared by John H. Rodriguez and Gary W. Knowles

DROPOUT PREVENTION ROUND TABLE TASK FORCES MEMBERSHIP

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RT Mrs. Irma Castro, Chair

RT Mrs. Catherine Bodinger

RT Rev. John Boller

RT Mrs. Sallie Cadwallader

Mr. Francisco Estrada

RT Mr. George Frey

Ms. Lorraine Johnson

RT Dr. Vida Van Brunt

Mr. Vernon Sukumu

Mr. Bob Stein, Staff Support

Task Force for Preschool through Grade 8 Student Academic Support Services

RT Dr. Alberto Ochoa, Chair

RT Mr. Antonio Alfaro

RT Dr. John Barrons

RT Mrs. Andree Carroll

Ms. Susan Chavez-Webb

RT Mrs. Sally Collier

Ms. Cecilia Firethunder

Ms. Maggie Gunner

Ms. Jane Phillips

Mr. Len Kidd, Staff Support

Task Force for Coordination and Monitoring of Prevention and Recovery Services and Programs

RT Ms. Claudette Rawlings, Chair

RT Dr. Eloiza Cisneros

RT Mr. Glen Estell

Mr. Paul Goren

RT Ms. Diane Marshall

Ms. Chris Pare

Ms. Susan Reese

Ms. Rachel Rodriguez

RT Mr. Cecil Steppe

Mr. Jim Wilson

Mr. Richard Burnett, Staff Support
Mrs. Carolyn Morris, " "
Mrs. Christine Pare " "

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Mrs. Virginia Foster

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Ms. Marge Murphy

RT Mr. Joe Ogilvie

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Ms. Jane Rains

Ms. Rosalia Salinas

RT Ms. Mary Catherine Swanson

Ms. Mary Castleberry, Staff Support

Task Force for Dropout Recovery Programs and Services

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Mrs. Judy Beck

RT Mr. Michael Carr

RT Mr. Bill Hoye

RT Dr. Eugene Journey

RT Mr. Kevin Kitching

RT Sgr. David Kruk

Mrs. Ricki Martinez

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Mr. Luis Villegas, Staff Support

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Dr. Ruben Espinoza

RT Mr. Norm Kellner

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SDSU

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APPENDIX D

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING PROFILE OF PROGRAM/PROJECT INTERVENTION

Introduction:

The basic purpose of the attached questionnaire is to properly identify programs/projects that address the prevention of the school dropout/high risk student. It is important to complete each item because this valuable information will serve as a basis for an accurate description and validation of the program that will be later written in a separate document. In order to facilitate the accurate description of the project, the following information should be considered for each item of the enclosed questionnaire.

1. Briefly describe the purpose, objective(s) and process of delivery of services.

2. This item is important for determing how the project will be replicated. The item should indicate how the program/project is supported.

3. This item should answer the following questions:

   3.1 For what type of population is the program targeted?
   3.2 Whom does it impact?
   3.3 What is the criteria for referral of student?
   3.4 List the project/program characteristics that are used.

4. The item should indicate the type of intervention addressed by the program/project.

5. The item should specify the type of curriculum program/project focus.

6. The item should indicate the grade level(s) of the schooling process the the intervention was designed to impact.

7. What have been the effects of the program? Have they had a positive effect on the high risk student? On the school dropout?

8. What type of monitoring and evaluation process is used in determining the impact of the program/project?

9. What significant data or findings have resulted from this intervention/ program?

10. What conditions are necessary for the program/project to be replicated, e.g. personnel, fiscal, curriculum or resources?

Items 11, 12 and 13 as specified.

PROFILE OF PROGRAM/PROJECT INTERVENTION
SDSU NOD Lau Center
San Diego, CA 92920

SCHOOL DISTRICT/AGENCY _____
ADDRESS _____
_____
PHONE: _____

NAME OF PROJECT/
INTERVENTION _____

DATE PROJECT/PROGRAM INITIATED: _____ CONTACT PERSON _____

1. Description

Purpose:

Objective(s):

Process of Delivery:

2. Support Funding:

( ) Supported State Funds
( ) Suppoted by District Funds
( ) Supported by Federal Funds
( ) Other Public Funds
( ) Public Non-profit
( ) Public Profit
( ) Private Non-profit
( ) Private Profit
Comment: _____
_____
_____
_____

3. Background of Need:

4. Type of Intervention:

( ) Community Directed
( ) Family Focused
( ) Organizational/Institution Focused
( ) Staff Focused
( ) Student Focused: ( ) Recovery of leavers
( ) Early Intervention
( ) Other _____

Comments: _____
_____

5. Orientation of Intervention:

( ) Academic: ( ) enrichment curriculum
( ) regular (core program)
( ) remedial

( ) Guidance: ( ) family counseling
( ) life skills
( ) social skills
( ) other_____

( ) Vocational: ( ) work-study
( ) career education
( ) career exploration
( ) job training

6. Level of Intervention:

( ) Pre-school ( ) Junior High
( ) K-6th. grade ( ) High School

7. Effects of Intervention:

8. Evaluation of Intervention:

( ) Short term/formative evaluation
( ) Long term/summative evaluation

Comment:

Data collected: ( ) Attendance Records
( ) Achievement Records
( ) Demographic Trends
( ) Other_____

What kind: _____
Where Found: _____
_____

9. Data/Findings of Intervention:

10. Replication:

11. Other comments on program:

12. Person completing Report: _____

13. Date of visit/documentation: _____

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QUESTIONS TO KEEP IN MIND IN OBSERVING THE CLASSROOM

1. How large is the classroom?
2. Do materials vary across grade levels?
3. Does the family participate in any way?
4. What is done with those students that are far behind in reading and writing skills?
5. What is done to focus on the alienated student?
6. What techniques are used for identifying the learning problem(s) of the individual pupil in the program?
7. How do teachers work together in planning the coordination of instructional activities for the program?
8. What procedures are used for measuring pupil achievement?
9. How do teachers resolve any significant discrepancies between expectancy and performance data?
10. How are children grouped? Or how do they group themselves?
11. How is individualized pupil progress reported to parents?

20 QUESTION CHECKLIST: How Does Your Proposed Policy Answer Them?

This checklist of 20 questions has been prepared to help policymakers frame family-school initiatives.

"Yes" answers to the questions that apply to a policy are a key to ensuring successful outcomes. It is useful to remember that the partnership between home and school and the relationship between the school and the community arise from separate rationales of different constituencies. Parents have a personal stake in their own children's achievement. Business and other groups are concerned with the overall educational base of the community.

Major categories for the questions below are provided to help policymakers key in to specific and often different constituency needs.

FAMILIES • Does the proposed policy . . .	YES	NO	NOT SURE
1. Support and assign educational responsibilities to the family?			
2. Provide families with practical information they need to help educate their children?			
3. Respond to family diversity and differing needs of . . .			
employed mothers?			
non-employed mothers?			
single parent families?			
(custodial and non-custodial parents)			
4. Encourage an active role for fathers?			
5. Encourage family self-help and self-sufficiency?			
6. Provide ways for families to help each other?			

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TEACHERS/SCHOOLS • Does the proposed policy . . .	**YES**	**NO**	**NOT SURE**
1. Support family involvement as an integral and funded part of the school's services?			
2. Provide teachers with training and information to help them work well with families?			
3. Provide for family involvement at all levels of schooling, with appropriate programs for differing student and family needs?			
4. Use school facilities for community needs, including care for children before and after school and during the summer?			
5. Find ways to coordinate teacher/school schedules to work with schedules of today's families?			
6. Emphasize early prevention of learning problems as much or more than later remediation in work with families?			

THIRD PARTIES: BUSINESS AND OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS • Does the proposed policy . . .	**YES**	**NO**	**NOT SURE**
1. Provide meaningful roles for the private sector?			
2. Connect community agencies in collaborative efforts to reach families?			
3. Involve senior citizens and non-parents in work of the school?			

OVERALL CONSIDERATIONS • Does the proposed policy . . .	**YES**	**NO**	**NOT SURE**
1. Provide for programs that take advantage of what's been learned through research and experience?			
2. Provide support for complementary, reinforcing efforts of schools, families, and community groups?			
3. Include evaluation so that programs can be judged effective or not?			
4. Provide for ways to continue programs judged effective?			
5. Encourage sharing of what has been accomplished?			

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NOTE: The next section, RECOMMENDATIONS, contains examples of programs and policies that address each of the questions on this checklist.

DROPOUT

- LEAVES SCHOOL BEFORE GRADUATION
- OVERWHELMING PRESSURES TO ABANDON SCHOOL DUE TO LACK OF SUPPORT AND MOTIVATION TO CONTINUE IN SCHOOL.